



ACTIVITY A1.2 - GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE FOR BALANCING ENVIRONMENTAL, SOCIAL, AND ECONOMIC TRADE-OFFS IN RAW MATERIALS VALUE CHAINS BY FOCUSING ON PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT TO ACHIEVE SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The aim of the document is to sum up the results of Activity A 1.2 including the territorial survey that took place regarding:

- critical raw materials and the development of their supply chains, with a particular emphasis on social reactions to activities related to the extraction and processing of raw materials, and
- the identification and evaluation of good practices for balancing environmental, social, and economic trade-offs in raw materials value chains” by focusing on public engagement to achieve social acceptance.

The report covers the following topics: the introduction (Section 1), an overview of the territorial survey including its objectives, design, and collected information (Section 2), the level of public engagement, main challenges, causes of public opposition, and statistics on good practices from partner questionnaires (Section 2), the analysis of survey results including the evaluation of good practices and public engagement strategies in the raw material sector (Section 3), and suggestions for policy improvements (Section 4).

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BREF: Best available techniques Reference documents

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

COVID-19: CoronaVirus Disease of 2019

CRMs: Critical Raw Material

CRMA: Critical Raw Material Act

CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility

EC: European Commission

EU: European Union

EV: Electric Vehicle

EIP: European Innovation Partnership (on raw materials)

FANC: Finnish Association for Nature Conservation

GDP: Gross Domestic Product

MSAT: Mine Site Assessment Tool

MWEI: Management of Waste from Extractive Industries

NGO: Non-Governmental Organisation

PPC: Public Power Corporation

RMF: Responsible Mining Foundation

RMI: Responsible Mining Index

RNC: Río Narcea Recursos Company

SDGs: Sustainable Development Goals

SLO: Social License to Operate

INTRODUCTION

The aim of Activity A 1.2 is to enhance the thematic knowledge of RAW4RES partners regarding social opposition to mining and processing activities in the raw materials sector. It seeks to identify and disseminate best practices for enhancing stakeholder and community engagement, as well as to offer guidelines for refining territorial policies to boost social acceptance for extractive and processing activities related to raw materials.

In this regard, KOZANI has provided a framework to facilitate the identification, collection, and documentation of exemplary governance practices within partner territories concerning stakeholder and community involvement in the raw materials sector. Subsequently, all partners analysed the territorial contributions during an online session held on February 29, 2024. They identified and assessed best practices against specific criteria, including the European Commission's 'EU principles for sustainable raw materials.'

The goal of this handbook is to explain how partners might modify current approaches to stakeholder engagement to improve dispute resolution capabilities and create consensus-building with local communities and stakeholders. It builds on the survey results and the online evaluation session.

The objective behind the preparation and presentation of this 'good practice' guide is to promote the adoption and enhancement of governance mechanisms (such as dispute resolution, consultation, and compensatory benefits mechanisms) in the Consortium Territories. The goal is to increase acceptance of initiatives within the raw material extraction and processing sector and to achieve social consensus.

KOZANI by collating all the territorial data collected by the partners as well as the results of the online workshop delivers here a "good practice" guide which will provide guidance for the adoption of the best practices identified by the partners.

In particular, the deliverable will include the following sections:

- the introduction to the activity (Section 1),
- an overview of the territorial survey's goals and design, the methods used to ensure data quality and coherence, and the collected information on public engagement levels, main challenges, causes of public opposition, and statistics on good practices from partner questionnaires (Section 2),
- the analysis of the survey results including the evaluation of good practices and public engagement strategies in the raw material sector (Section 3), and
- suggestions for policy improvements (Section 4).

OVERVIEW OF THE TERRITORIAL SURVEY

Objective and design of the survey

The survey aimed to identify and document best practices for public participation in the raw materials sector across partnership territories, which would subsequently inform policy advancements in public engagement. To ensure robust data collection, a structured approach was adopted, encompassing identification criteria and a questionnaire distributed among all partners for uniform documentation. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were established to gauge the effectiveness of the survey process, primarily focusing on the quantity of identified good practices.

The questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, simplifying the research process, ensuring data consistency and accuracy, and facilitating analysis. Partners were tasked with describing successful public engagement practices in the raw materials industry and evaluating each practice's effectiveness, impact, and transferability potential through a mix of open- and closed-ended questions.

Questionnaire

The questionnaire comprised three sections:

A. Contact Information: Partners provided their name, affiliation, email, and country coverage.

B. Identifying Good Practices: Information gathered included the practice's name, location, implementing entities, key takeaways, and resources, aimed at analysing factors contributing to successful public engagement and providing insights for future initiatives.

C. Assessing Effectiveness, Impact, and Transferability: This section evaluated the practices' effectiveness in achieving goals, impact in producing measurable outcomes, and transferability to different contexts, ensuring relevance and effectiveness across diverse environments.

Evaluation Process:

The evaluation of collected good practices is crucial for identifying those most suitable for adoption in RAW4RES territories. Partners were encouraged to evaluate practices during documentation, considering predefined criteria and EU principles for sustainable raw materials (in more detail below). The evaluation utilised a comprehensive rating approach, covering all aspects of practices on a scale from 0 to 3 to ensure thorough consideration. Data analysis will identify patterns and trends, offering valuable insights and recommendations to enhance territorial policies.

In this context, a good practice will be deemed as

- 'Mediocre' when its aggregated score is between 10 and 15 minimum.
- 'Good' when its score is from 15 to 25.
- 'Excellent' when its score is from 25 to 30.

EU principles for sustainable raw materials

EU Principles - Social:

1. Uphold Human Rights, Communities, and Governance:

- Respect the human rights, cultures, customs, and values of affected populations.
- Foster constructive dialogue with communities and workers to promote social, economic, and institutional development.
- Ensure safe living conditions in affected communities, including indigenous people.

2. Ensure Decent Work for the Workforce:

- Prioritize health and safety improvements, aiming for zero accidents and continuous enhancement of worker skills.
- Respect workers' rights in accordance with International Labour Organization Fundamental Conventions.

EU Principles - Economic and Governance:

3. Compliance with EU Laws and Regulations:

- Adhere to EU laws and regulations, including EU Treaties.

4. Recognize the Importance of Sustainable Raw Materials Extraction and Processing:

- Acknowledge the significance of sustainable extraction and processing for economic growth, Europe's sustainability, climate neutrality, digital economy, innovation, waste recovery, energy transition, circular economy, and resource efficiency.

5. Implement Sound Financial Management:

- Practice accountable management, integrating sustainability into corporate governance strategies.

- Ensure robust transparency and ethical corporate practices, emphasizing corporate social responsibility, risk management, and adherence to EU and national legislation.

EU Principles - Environmental:

6. Adhere to Environmental Management Practices:

- Implement environmental management practices that ensure technical feasibility, monitor impacts, and conserve biodiversity, aligning with EU legislation, the European Green Deal, and Biodiversity Strategy.

7. Promote Energy Efficiency and Climate Change Mitigation:

- Enhance energy efficiency and support climate change mitigation by promoting renewable energy sources and minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, aligning with global climate agreements.

- Assess operations' vulnerability to climate change and enhance resilience through adaptation measures, contributing to the resilience of communities, including indigenous peoples.

8. Contribute to the Circular Economy:

- Support the EU's circular economy goals by promoting safe product use, recycling, and disposal.

- Encourage material stewardship in mining and processing, including by-product extraction and waste recovery, to promote sustainable resource utilisation. Participants were required to assess the presented good practices' effectiveness, impact on public engagement, and adaptability across contexts, encouraging suggestions for modifications for better public engagement and stakeholder interactions aligned to EU principles on raw materials extraction for sustainable raw materials.

Presentation of the collected territorial information

The subsection presents a detailed description of the data gathered by each partner, offering insights into the level of public engagement observed across all partner territories.

Level of territorial public engagement and the main challenges

According to the study, there is a moderate level of public participation, however there are a number of challenges to public participation in the raw materials industry, such as:

1. Limited public awareness of sustainable mining practices: There exists a notable lack of public awareness regarding sustainable mining practices, potentially hindering support, and collaboration in this area.
2. Policy framework gaps hindering meaningful public participation: Gaps in the existing policy framework and lack of political will pose barriers to meaningful public participation, limiting the scope for community input and involvement.
3. Lack of interest from private actors (e.g. mining companies, recycling companies) in mining practices and processing activities: Private actors demonstrate limited interest in engaging with sustainable mining practices, potentially hampering collaborative efforts and innovation in this sector. On the other hand, there is interest in processing activities and recycling, which is challenged by how profitable economically the activities are.
4. Insufficient information on public participation in decision making: Inadequate dissemination of information regarding public participation in decision-making processes creates ambiguity and hampers transparency within the sector.
5. Public trust: There is a prevalent perception among the public that decisions regarding mining activities are predetermined, undermining trust and confidence in the decision-making process.

Main causes of public opposition in partners' territories

The social opposition encountered within the raw materials sector arises from a multitude of factors, each bearing significant implications for affected communities. These factors include:

Social such as:

- Displacement of communities: The extraction of raw materials often necessitates the relocation of existing communities, disrupting social structures and livelihoods.
- Cultural and heritage loss: Raw materials extraction activities can encroach upon areas rich in cultural significance and heritage, leading to the erosion of cultural identity and historical heritage.
- Disruption of quality of life: Noise from extraction or recycling processes can disrupt nearby residents' quality of life, potentially leading to health issues like stress and sleep disturbances. Odors from recycling can make living conditions uncomfortable, while dust from airborne particles can cause respiratory issues and reduce air quality.
- Safety: Increased traffic from large vehicles used in the extraction or processing of raw materials can also pose a safety hazard to the local population.

Environmental such as:

- Disruption of local flora and fauna: The extraction or processing (such as gravel pits and recycling units) of raw materials can disrupt ecosystems, leading to the displacement or extinction of indigenous flora and fauna species.
- Contamination of local water sources: Raw materials extraction and processing may result in the pollution of nearby water bodies, jeopardizing water quality and ecosystem health.
- Degradation of natural landscapes: The alteration of landscapes due to extraction activities can lead to habitat destruction and loss of scenic beauty, impacting both ecological integrity and recreational value.
- Air pollution, smells and odours: Operations associated with raw materials extraction and processing activities can release pollutants into the atmosphere, contributing to air quality degradation and posing health risks to nearby communities. Even in cases of smells and odours that are not health risking, the discomfort of living nearby causes opposition.
- Noise and dust from extraction or processing of raw materials can negatively impact local wildlife, ecosystems, and biodiversity.

Economic/governance such as:

- Transparency of processes: Concerns regarding the lack of transparency in decision-making processes, including permitting and regulatory enforcement, fuel distrust and opposition among stakeholders.
- Negative impact on economic activities: Extraction activities may adversely affect local economies, particularly sectors such as agriculture and tourism and infrastructures, mainly on road and traffic safety, leading to economic losses and community disapproval.
- Deterioration of property value: The result of all the impacts mentioned above, social – environmental and economical, are finally depicted on property and land value.

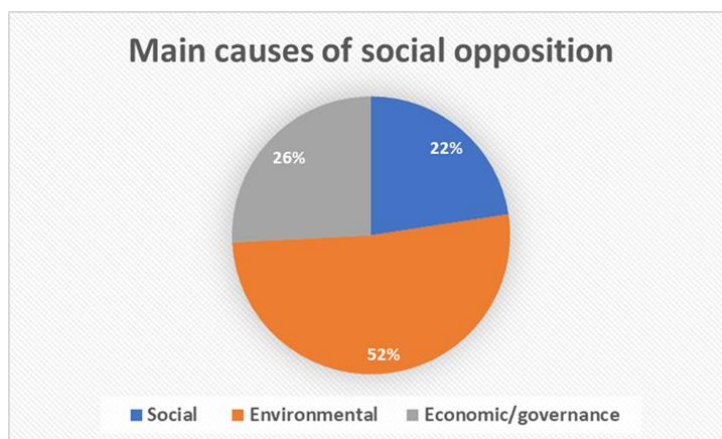


Figure 1 Main causes of social opposition in partners' territories as reported by partners.

The percentages displayed in the graph represent the distribution of partners' responses across three categories: social, environmental, and economic/governance. Once all the responses were collected, each response was categorised into one of the three categories: S: social, E: environmental, and G: economic/governance. The total number of the responses in each category was counted and then summed up to get the total number of responses (T): $T = S + E + G$. For each category, the percentage of responses (P) was calculated by dividing the number of responses in each category by the total number of responses and then multiplying with 100: $P = (\text{Number of responses in each category} / T) * 100$.

While social and economic factors also contribute, it is evident that environmental considerations hold greater significance in shaping public opinion and opposition within the raw materials sector in these territories.

Statistics on good practices identified from completed questionnaires by partners:

The data collected from completed questionnaires by partners reveals valuable insights into the identification of good practices within the raw materials sector. More specifically, the following details are presented:

In total, six partners from five different countries participated in the survey, highlighting the multinational collaboration and diverse perspectives involved in the study.

Across the survey responses, a total of 14 good practices were identified, demonstrating a commendable effort by partners to recognize effective strategies and initiatives within their respective regions.

The breakdown of identified good practices by region is as follows:

| Partner | No of identified good practices |
|-----------------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Region of StereaEllada (RSE), Greece | 2 |
| Frederikshavn Municipality (FHN), Denmark | 1 |
| Bucharest - Ilfov Regional Development Agency | 2 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|
| (ADR-BI), Romania | |
| FUNDECYT Scientific and Technological Park of Extremadura (FUNDECYT-PCTEX), Spain | 2 |
| Business Support Centre, Kranj (BSC), Slovenia | 1 |
| Municipality of Kozani (KOZANI), Greece | 6 |

Legal status of implementers of good practices:

The results regarding the category of the implementing entity of the identified good practices are the following:

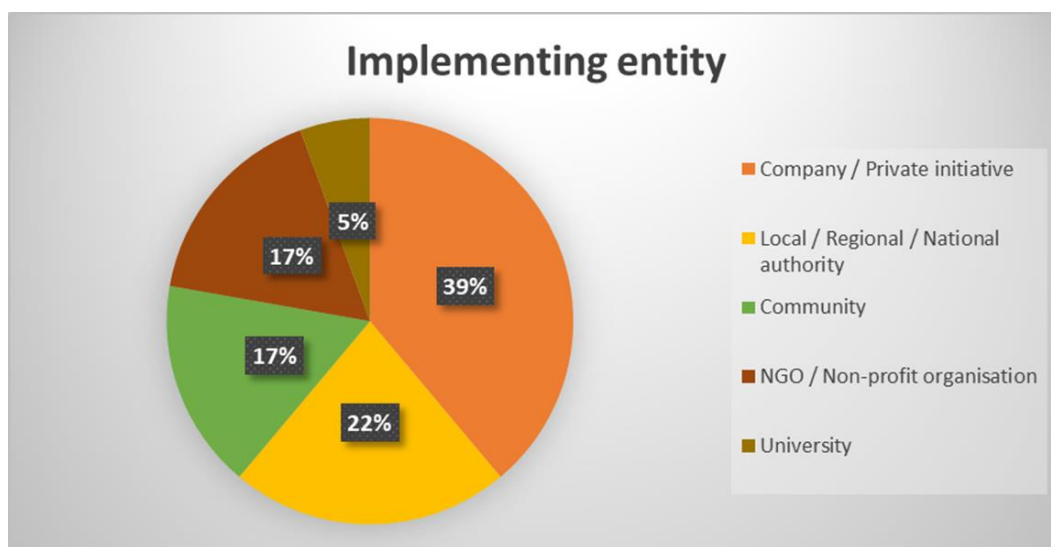


Figure 2 Categories of the implementing entities of the identified good practices

- Companies and private initiatives top the list with 39% representation. Their significant presence highlights the crucial role of the private sector in driving practices and policies within the raw materials sector.
- Governmental entities account for 22% of the representation. This percentage suggests a strong role for authorities in the partners' regions in mediating between public interests and industry demands, influencing public debate and attitudes through policy and regulation enforcement.
- Community-led projects make up 17% of the representation. This percentage reflects the increasing community involvement in shaping business practices and regulations regarding environmental and social issues.
- NGOs and non-profits also represent 17% of the implementing entities highlighting their significant presence and influence in the raw materials sector. This percentage reflects the growing importance of civil society in shaping industry practices and policies.

- Universities contribute to 5% of the representation of good practices in partners' territories. Their lower percentage reflects a more indirect yet essential contribution to the sector's sustainable development. Universities primarily contribute through research and education, supporting the sector with innovations and informed policy recommendations.

The results reflect a balanced and multi-stakeholder approach to implementing good practices in the raw materials sector. They highlight the importance of diverse perspectives and contributions from different types of entities:

Forms of Public Engagement

The survey results reveal various forms of public engagement in the mining sector, emphasizing the importance of open communication channels.

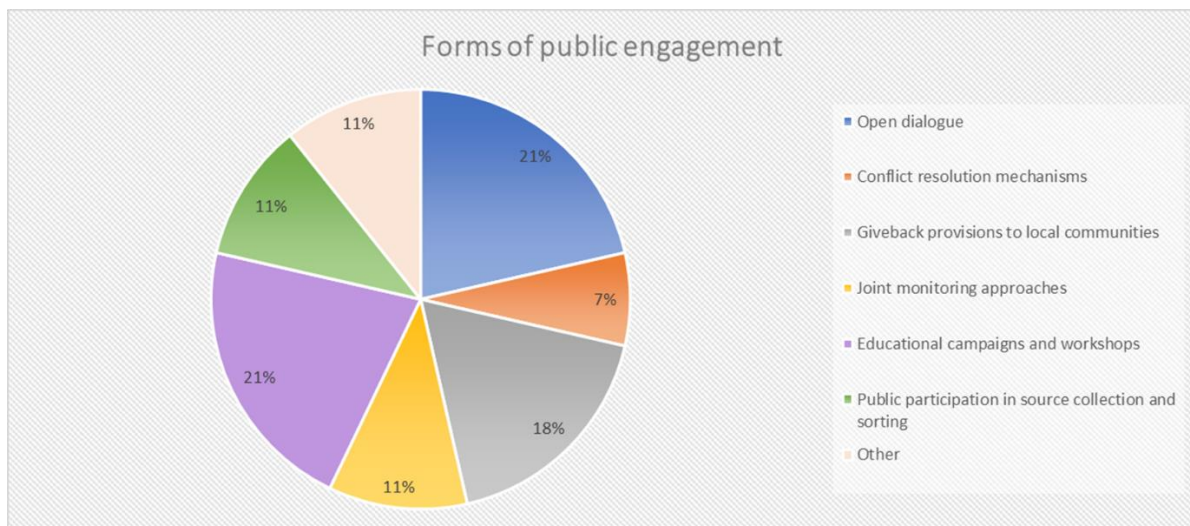


Figure 3 Results regarding forms of public engagement in partnership territories.

Open dialogue (21%) is a prevalent form of public engagement, promoting transparency and communication to reduce opposition and foster collaboration. Educational campaigns and workshops (21%) are crucial for empowering communities and clarifying industrial procedures to foster informed advocacy. Giveback provisions (18%) are significant representations, highlighting the industry's commitment to enhancing the well-being and socio-economic prosperity of affected communities. Joint monitoring approaches (11%) reflect a collaborative effort to oversee and evaluate the impacts of raw materials activities, enhancing transparency and accountability. Public participation in source collection and sorting (11%) signifies a hands-on approach to waste management and resource conservation, aligning with sustainable development goals. Conflict resolution mechanisms (7%) promote reconciliation and mutually acceptable solutions, while other (11%) include sharing economy models, restoration efforts, and web-based systems. These strategies leverage technology and sustainability principles to enhance participation and promote ecological restoration.

The emphasis on open communication, educational programs, and giveback provisions demonstrates a broad commitment to transparency, empowerment, and community well-being. These practices contribute to trust, teamwork, and sustainable development, aligning with the present emphasis on responsible resource management. The findings suggest a trend towards more inclusive and socially responsible behaviours in the raw materials sector.

Public participation in decision-making processes is essential for overcoming opposition and establishing trust among mining firms, authorities, communities, and stakeholders.

Key features for the success of the identified good practices

The results regarding the key features for the success of identified good practices highlight several aspects that contribute to achieving public acceptance in the raw materials sector:

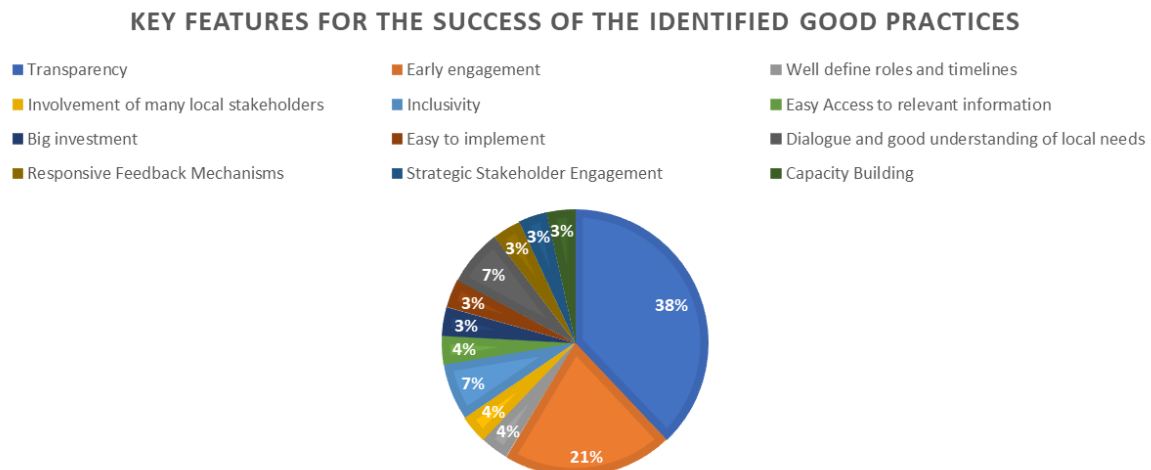


Figure 4 Results regarding the key features for the success of the identified good practices

Transparency is crucial to building trust and credibility in the raw materials business, according to 38% of respondents. Open communication channels and processes are critical for accountability and reducing scepticism, since they ensure stakeholders understand decisions and connect activities with community expectations and regulatory obligations. Early participation (21%) is particularly important for public acceptance since it allows public to influence project outcomes, fostering ownership and trust. Inclusivity (7%) is an important feature, indicating a commitment to equity and diversity in decision-making processes. Effective discussion and awareness of local needs (7%) are critical for developing rapport and trust, emphasising the significance of customised approaches. Additional factors such as capacity building, responsive feedback mechanisms, easy access to relevant information, and well-defined roles and responsibilities are also expected as partners reported to contribute to public acceptance in the sector. These factors are integral to fostering collaboration, trust-building, and transparency, emphasising the need for a holistic

approach to public engagement, addressing various aspects of stakeholder interaction to build trust and credibility over time.

Presentation and thematic categorization of the good practices

The presented table categorizes the identified good practices based on their predominant thematic areas. Additional details for each practice can be found in the subsequent text.

| Thematic Category | Good Practice | Location |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------|
| 1) Open Dialogue | Consultation & Annual Open Days – RSE (GP1) | Greece |
| | Open dialogue procedure of Municipality of Kozani, regarding Environmental Impact – KOZANI (GP10) | Greece |
| | Las Navas mining project - FUNDECYT-PCTEX (GP6) | Spain |
| | Aguablanca Mine - FUNDECYT-PCTEX (GP7) | Spain |
| | Lignite Research and Exploitation Rights Special Fee – KOZANI (GP9) | Greece |
| | Public Power Corporation Policy on employment of local population – KOZANI (GP11) | Greece |
| 2) Giveback Provisions to Local Communities | Las Navas mining project - FUNDECYT-PCTEX (GP6) | Spain |
| | Aguablanca Mine - FUNDECYT-PCTEX (GP7) | Spain |
| | Lignite Research and Exploitation Rights Special Fee – KOZANI (GP9) | Greece |
| | Public Power Corporation Policy on employment of local population – KOZANI (GP11) | Greece |
| 3) Joint Monitoring Approaches | To raise awareness of the importance of security of supply of critical raw materials in Denmark (GP3) | Denmark |
| | Web-based industrial accident notification system Baia Mare Aurul Gold Mine (GP5) | Romania |
| 4) Educational Campaigns and Workshops & Public Participation in Source Collection and Sorting | LIFE Turn to e-circular – BSC Slovenia (GP8) | Slovenia |
| | School reward program for batteries collection – KOZANI (GP13) | Greece |
| | Foundation of Department of Mineral Resources Engineering of the University of Western Macedonia (GP14) | Greece |
| 5) Non-active Mining Sites | Tourist and educational destination "Vagonetto" – RSE (GP2) | Greece |
| | Valea Jiului Development Society Project – ADR-BI (GP4) | Romania |
| | Reforestation – KOZANI (GP12) | Greece |

1) Open dialogue

Good Practice #1 Consultation & Annual Open Days – RSE Greece

MYTILINEOS Energy & Metals S.A., a private sector company involved in activities that ensure the availability and delivery of critical raw materials, such as gallium and rare earth elements like scandium, to Europe, has taken significant steps to enhance public engagement through a structured feedback mechanism.

To foster transparent and constructive dialogue with the community, MYTILINEOS Energy & Metals S.A. hosts Annual Open Days. During these events, a tailored questionnaire is distributed to attendees. This survey assesses various aspects of the company's operations, including its overall image, planning, and organization, providing valuable insights into individual variables.

Several challenges have been encountered in this initiative such as ensuring widespread community participation in the feedback process, accurately interpreting the diverse perspectives of stakeholders, and achieving meaningful engagement through the satisfaction survey.

To overcome these challenges, MYTILINEOS has implemented several strategies:

- Leveraging digital platforms to reach a broader audience and facilitate participation.
- Implementing segmented communication strategies to address specific stakeholder groups effectively.
- Ensuring transparency in the feedback process to build trust and credibility.
- Building capacity within the organization to manage and respond to feedback.
- Facilitating collaborative problem-solving workshops to address community concerns.
- Continuous monitoring and evaluation of the feedback mechanism to improve its effectiveness.

The satisfaction questionnaire encourages open-ended comments and suggestions for improvements, allowing the company to directly address community concerns. This proactive feedback loop demonstrates MYTILINEOS Co.'s commitment to fostering a transparent and constructive dialogue with the community, thereby enhancing public engagement and trust in their operations.

Good Practice #10 Open dialogue procedure of Municipality of Kozani, regarding Environmental Impact of activities – KOZANI Greece

The Municipality of Kozani has established an open-dialogue mechanism with local populations in order to convey its views on the environmental and social impact of various operations in its region, both current and planned.

The process involves several steps to ensure comprehensive public participation such as:

- Information sharing: For each activity, the Directorate of Environment informs members of the Municipal Council and the Head of local councils about the environmental impact study.
- Public meetings: These activities are then discussed in open Municipal Council meetings, where representatives and interested citizens can express their opinions.
- Documentation and decisions: The opinions gathered are recorded, and a written decision is delivered to the competent authorities and involved enterprises through the Digital Environmental Registry, an official ministry portal, and the official municipality channels.

Challenges faced during implementation include managing many activities across different villages and limited response time for stakeholders to participate and provide feedback.

To address these challenges, the Municipality of Kozani has employed several strategies such as recruitment and training of additional personnel, engagement of local technical and geotechnical chambers, and enhancing the quality of decision-making through working groups.

This open-dialogue mechanism has led to several positive outcomes such as enhanced citizen awareness, active participation in public discourse, empowerment of the local community, protection of the local environment, and realization of economic and environmental benefits.

2) Giveback provisions to local communities

Good Practice #6 Las Navas mining project– FUNDECYT-PCTEX Spain

Lithium Iberia has launched the Las Navas mining project, a sustainable initiative to extract lithium from one of the largest European Union reserves, located in Cañaveral, Caceres. The project, expected to last 30 years, will involve the integration of a lithium battery factory in Badajoz and a lithium battery “gigafactory” in Navalморal de la Mata.

The Las Navas mining project is founded on the principles of Greening Mine, which focus on ensuring that the economic benefits generated by the project circulate back to the region. These principles emphasize transparency, environmental sustainability, and community engagement.

Regarding the implementation, Lithium Iberia has prioritized both transparency and environmental sustainability throughout the project's development. This includes open communication with local communities and stakeholders to build trust and address any concerns. Additionally, the project incorporates Green Mining 4.0 principles, which involve optimizing mining processes through digital transformation and implementing advanced health management systems. Lastly, a robust CSR program has been established, focusing on health, education, and social initiatives to benefit the local community.

The project faced challenges such as local conflicts in neighbouring areas and initial disagreements on mining methods, which required careful management to resolve and create tension.

Lithium Iberia successfully tackled challenges by adopting Green Mining 4.0 principles, enhancing efficiency and minimal environmental impact, and implementing digital technologies for better project management. Advanced health management systems were implemented to ensure worker safety and community welfare. The company also reinforced its commitment to Corporate Social Responsibility, focusing on community welfare and sustainable practices.

Good Practice #7 Aguablanca Mine - FUNDECYT-PCTEX Spain

The Aguablanca Mine in Monesterio, Extremadura, has been approved for reopening in July 2024 after an eight-year hiatus. The mine, which primarily deals with nickel and copper ore, will feed into a battery factory for electric vehicles in Badajoz, promoting economic growth within the region. The mine has substantial ore reserves of 3 million tonnes, an anticipated lifespan of around ten years, and projected employment of 330 direct workers.

The reopening of the Aguablanca Mine is driven by a commitment to modernisation and sustainable development. Río Narcea Recursos Company (RNC) aims to enhance technical expertise among its workforce and incorporate robust Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) practices, including social, cultural, educational, and health initiatives.

RNC is investing heavily in modernizing the mine to improve efficiency and safety. This includes upgrading equipment and implementing new mining technologies. Significant efforts are also being made to enhance the technical expertise of the workforce through training and development programs. The initiative integrates

comprehensive CSR practices, focusing on social, cultural, educational, and health programs to benefit the local community.

Challenges encountered during implementation include adapting to new regional laws mandating underground mining, fostering political and social consensus, and ensuring transparency regarding employment figures, mine lifespan, available ore reserves, and administrative processes.

Strategies to overcome these challenges include compliance with regional laws, transitioning to underground mining, embracing sustainable practices, and implementing a carbon footprint reduction initiative.

The reopening of the Aguablanca Mine has brought numerous positive outcomes, including economic growth, workforce enhancement, community development, and environmental sustainability. The mine supports the local economy by providing employment and contributing to the development of an electric vehicle battery factory. RNC's CSR programs have positively impacted social, cultural, educational, and health aspects of the community, while reducing carbon footprints.

Good Practice #9 Lignite Research and Exploitation Rights Special Fee – KOZANI Greece

Lignite power production in Macedonia involves the Public Power Corporation (PPC) contributing a fee per MWh produced, which is distributed to local governments and municipalities. A five-year development plan is formulated based on applications from beneficiaries, ensuring that funds are directed towards priority projects. The main goal of this practice is to ensure that the fees generated from lignite power production are effectively utilized to benefit local communities. This includes funding infrastructure projects, social initiatives, and supporting local businesses, thereby improving the overall quality of life in the region. Monitoring committees oversee the implementation and progress of the development plan, ensuring accountability and transparency.

Several challenges were encountered during the implementation of this practice such as delays in fee allocation from PPC to the beneficiaries, beneficiary delays to utilise the allocated funds, non-compliance with eligibility criteria complicating the allocation process, initial inefficiencies in fund utilization, and unhealthy interactions among enterprises, authorities, and the public. To overcome these challenges, monitoring committees are established to monitor the allocation and utilisation of the funds; technical assistance is included in eligible plan costs, analytical guides are developed to facilitate proper application and utilisation of funds, and fund rollover so to allow unabsorbed funds to be carried over to subsequent periods.

The practice has resulted in several positive outcomes, such as financing infrastructure projects, promoting social initiatives, improving residents' quality of life

through improved services, and supporting local businesses, contributing to economic development and stability. These initiatives have been implemented to benefit the local community.

Good Practice #11 Public Power Corporation Policy on employment of local population – KOZANI Greece

Since the 1970s, the Public Power Corporation (PPC) has prioritized local residents' employment, especially those affected by infrastructure development. This policy, initially mandated by law, has evolved into a voluntary commitment since 2019, emphasizing qualifications alongside local residency. The main principle of this practice is to prioritize local employment opportunities, thereby ensuring that community members benefit directly from infrastructure projects. By emphasizing qualifications alongside residency, the practice aims to support workforce development and enhance socio-economic well-being in the region.

During the implementation of the practice the challenges encountered include a lack of the necessary qualifications in the initial workforce posing challenges for employment and decreased employment opportunities post-2000, exacerbated by recent closures of lignite power stations.

To overcome these, PPC established technical schools to provide vocational training and skill development, created a dedicated mining department within educational institutions, and adapted educational programs to align with industry trends and requirements.

The positive results of this good practice include job creation, increased family income, maintenance of an active and skilled workforce, and strengthening community engagement and support for local businesses through sustained employment opportunities.

3) Joint monitoring approaches

Good Practice #3 To raise awareness of the importance of security of supply of critical raw materials in Denmark, using value chain analysis to emphasize the issue - FHN Denmark

This practice aims to raise awareness about the security of supply of critical raw materials in Denmark. By utilizing value chain analysis, the practice emphasizes the importance of ensuring continuous and safe access to these materials. It involves cross-sectoral cooperation and engagement with various stakeholders, including municipal politicians, regional mining authorities, and key players in the recycling industry.

Challenges faced during implementation included lack of political incentives, difficulties accessing raw material data for mapping and analysis, and environmental considerations added complexity to the analysis and decision-making process.

To overcome these challenges, various strategies were employed such as: Engaging in dialogue with politicians and stakeholders to address concerns and garner support, collaborating with relevant parties to improve access to raw material data for mapping and analysis, and advocating for the importance of raw material security and raising awareness among stakeholders and the public.

The implementation of this practice has raised awareness about the importance of securing critical raw materials for job security and transitioning to green industries. It has fostered cooperation among sectors and stakeholders, promoting dialogue and joint efforts to address raw material challenges. The practice has also garnered political attention, leading to increased support and action at national and European levels.

Good Practice #5 Web-based industrial accident notification system Baia Mare Aurul Gold Mine - ADR-BI Romania

After the Baia Mare mining accident, Romania implemented a web-based Industrial Accident Notification System to prevent similar incidents and improve social acceptance of mining projects. The system, implemented by Eurosun mining, aimed to ensure prompt notification of accidents to neighbouring countries. The adverse effects of the accident were felt by the population across Romania, Hungary, former Yugoslavia, Bulgaria, and Ukraine. The main goal of this practice was to prevent industrial accidents and improve social acceptance of mining projects by enhancing transparency and communication. By implementing an effective notification system, the practice aimed to mitigate the adverse effects of accidents and build trust between stakeholders.

Challenges faced during implementation included bridging the gap between legal requirements and commitment to safeguard human health from industrial disasters, overcoming public distrust and scepticism towards mining projects and notification systems, and strengthening international collaboration and cooperation with neighbouring countries under the UNECE's Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents. The company implemented strategies to address the challenges of accidents, including enhancing transparency and communication, collaborating with stakeholders like local officials and environmental NGOs, and advocating for strengthened European legislation to address the severity and recurrence of accidents.

The practice of collaboration between local officials and environmental NGOs has led to improved oversight and public education. It has also strengthened European legislation due to the severity of accidents and expert recommendations. This practice has also enhanced trust and transparency, promoting a more constructive approach to industrial safety.

4) Educational campaigns and workshops and public participation in source collection and sorting

Good Practice #8 LIFE Turn to e-circular → I'm still useful – BSC Slovenia

The LIFE Turn to e-circular initiative aims to reduce e-waste by promoting increased usage rates and extended lifespan of appliances through community engagement in sharing and reusing still functional devices. This project focuses on conserving natural resources, reducing energy consumption, and lowering CO2 emissions associated with mining practices.

Challenges faced during implementation include designing an engaging awareness campaign to communicate the benefits of sharing, reusing, or recycling electronic devices, and addressing common reasons for hoarding e-waste at home instead of recycling or reusing it.

Strategies to overcome these challenges include implementing "E-transformer 2.0" engagement strategies to attract public interest and participation, establishing dedicated reuse corners and campaigns for collecting still functional devices, developing "Shure it can be done" supporting videos, and setting up facilities for refurbishing and second-hand shops.

The initiative achieved notable results during its pilot testing period: 21 tons of still functional devices were collected through 64 reuse corners, with 24% successfully reintroduced to the market. The initiative also preserved secondary raw materials, contributing to resource conservation and sustainable waste management.

Good Practice #13 School reward program for batteries collection – KOZANI Greece

AFIS Waste Management, a waste management company, is implementing a school-based recycling incentive program in Greece. The program encourages students to collect a target weight of batteries throughout the school year, with rewards for schools meeting or collecting the highest quantity. The AFIS school-based recycling incentive program aims to boost battery recycling rates, educate students about recycling and environmental protection, and provide rewards to motivate participation and achieve recycling targets among students and schools.

The initiative has faced challenges such as ensuring sufficient school participation to make the program effective and impactful. To overcome these, AFIS developed a comprehensive website to provide information and resources about the program and communicated directly with schools to encourage participation and provide necessary support and guidance.

The program has significantly improved waste management, environmental protection, and educational benefits by enhancing battery recycling practices in schools, reducing CO2 emissions, and raising awareness about recycling and sustainability.

Good Practice #14 Foundation of Department of Mineral Resources Engineering of the University of Western Macedonia – KOZANI Greece

The Ministry of Education in Kozani established the Technical Department of Mining in 1992, which later evolved into the Department of Mineral Resources Engineering in 2019. This department has been instrumental in connecting research and industry, benefiting all stakeholders involved in the mining sector.

The department faced several challenges during its evolution such as limited response from the community and relevant agencies regarding the economic significance of mineral resource exploitation while a decrease in mining activities led to lower student admissions and fewer research project assignments.

To overcome these, strategies included implementing a local-level information program targeting secondary schools with information programs to raise awareness about the significance of mineral resources and transitioning educational and research programs towards circular economy practices to stay relevant and sustainable.

The department's good practice on social involvement has resulted in recruitment of new scientific staff, enhancement of environmental education initiatives, fostering greater awareness and responsibility, advancement in research, innovation, and sustainable development efforts, and regional upliftment through the establishment and operation of a university, benefiting the local economy and community.

5) Non active mining sites

Good Practice #2 Tourist and educational destination "Vagonetto" – RSE Greece (Redevelopment of former mine)

The second good practice of RSE partner involves the transformation of an old mining site into the tourist and educational destination "Vagonetto." This initiative was undertaken by the company responsible for mining bauxite in the area, with the

aim of honouring the district's miners and contributing to local economic development.

The form of this good practice centres around the redevelopment of a former mine, repurposing the site to serve as a destination for tourism and education. The redevelopment of the former mine into a tourist destination provides opportunities for local communities to engage with the industry in a positive and interactive manner. Community members may participate in guided tours, cultural events, and other activities, fostering dialogue and collaboration between the public and industry stakeholders.

The project faced challenges in community engagement and sustainable tourism, aiming to engage locals and promote a positive perception of the mining industry while balancing economic benefits with environmental preservation.

The challenges were tackled through interactive activities, such as designing cultural events and engaging tours to attract visitors and encourage community participation, and educational programs, which highlighted the history and significance of mining in the area.

The transformation of the old mining site into "Vagonetto" helps to bridge the gap between the raw materials sector and the public by providing educational, cultural, and economic opportunities that promote understanding, appreciation, and engagement with the industry. Additionally, this project has led to tourism growth, economic development, educational outreach, and cultural preservation. Increased tourism creates new business opportunities and jobs, while educational programs enhance public understanding of the mining industry and honour local miners' contributions.

Good Practice #4 Valea Jiului Development Society Project – ADR-BI Romania

The Valea Jiului Development Society, in collaboration with citizens, local artists, six mayors, the local University, private sector stakeholders, and a mining company, repurposed the Petrița Mine into a multifunctional centre for administrative, economic, and cultural activities. This initiative aimed to revitalize the community and promote sustainable development in the Jiu Valley Region, Romania's former largest coal mining region.

The restoration created an active communal space that hosted activities for people of all ages, such as screenings of the documentary *Petrița Planet* and a Robotics Valley festival. Over 30 local events were held, with 35 performers and 3,000 attendees. The implementation took place in the Jiu Valley Region, Romania's former largest coal mining region. The Valea Jiului Development Society, a civil society coalition comprising 21 local NGOs, was the main implementer and legal status.

Challenges faced during implementation included a) managing and coordinating a diverse group of stakeholders, including public authorities, private sector partners, and local NGOs, and b) overcoming scepticism due to lack of trust towards public authorities.

The challenges were tackled through a collaborative approach, involving local artists, mayors, university, and private sector partners, and transparent communication, fostering trust and community participation.

The society's achievements include strengthening local civil society, promoting sustainable development, fostering collaboration, and encouraging equitable investments.

Good Practice #12 Reforestation – KOZANI Greece

The Directorate of Forests in Greece enforces strict policies for forest protection, allowing deforestation only under exceptional circumstances. Enterprises are mandated to engage in reforestation efforts in equivalent areas with identical species, maintain forest roads, and implement fire prevention measures.

This policy faces challenges in implementation, including time-consuming decision-making within the Directorate of Forests and reforestation uncertainty, especially in areas heavily impacted by industrial activities, which can delay the initiation of reforestation efforts.

The policy aims to address these challenges by mandating reforestation with identical species, restoring disrupted natural habitats to their original state, and enhancing coordination between the Directorate and enterprises through streamlined decision-making processes.

Forest protection policies have led to significant benefits such as preserving natural habitats, mitigating CO₂ emissions, and enhancing water and soil retention. Reforestation efforts ensure biodiversity and ecological balance, while improved environmental measures enhance the health and resilience of forest ecosystems. These policies contribute to the overall health and resilience of forests. The strict forest protection policies enforced by the Directorate of Forests in Greece demonstrate a proactive approach to balancing economic activities, such as mining, with environmental conservation.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY

The section presents the analysis of the results of the survey that took place during the online workshop and aimed at identifying best practices to promote participatory processes and mechanisms in the raw materials value chain to increase the social acceptance in activities related to the extraction and processing of raw materials. More specifically, it includes the following:

Evaluation of good practices

The subsection presents the results of the evaluation of good practices through the distributed Google Form that took place in the context of the online workshop on the 29th of February 2024. This evaluation was based on the criteria outlined in the deliverable titled "Methodology for the identification and recording of good governance practices for balancing environmental, social, and economic parameters in supply chains of raw materials". Each good practice underwent assessment regarding its efficacy, potential impact on raw materials extraction and processing activities, feasibility of implementation within consortium territories, and alignment with the directives outlined in the "European principles for sustainable raw materials."

Effectiveness

The responses to the first survey question about the effectiveness of identified good practices in addressing regional challenges related to public engagement in the raw materials value chain reveal that certain good practices are more effective than others. GP8 (Life Turn to e-circular), GP3 (Recycling City), and GP10 (Open dialogue procedure of Municipality of Kozani) are considered the most effective, demonstrating high levels of engagement, community involvement, and positive impact on sustainable resource management.



Figure 5 Level of effectiveness in addressing public engagement.

These practices align well with the environmental concerns and contribute directly to resource conservation and sustainability. Regional variability is also noted, with several effective practices from different regions, suggesting that successful approaches to public engagement in the raw materials value chain can vary depending on local contexts, resources, and priorities. GP14, the educational program at the Foundation of Department of Mineral Resources Engineering, is ranked as the least effective, suggesting that educational initiatives may not directly address specific challenges or engage the community effectively in the context of the raw materials value chain.

Impact

The results from the second question show that most of the practices were highly evaluated in terms of impact. Among these practices, GP3 (Recycling City) and GP6 (Adaptation to the new regional law at Aguablanca Mine) stand out as being very successful at winning over community support to initiatives involving the extraction or processing of raw materials. These practices are recognised for their promotion of environmental responsibility, community involvement, and compliance with regional laws, all of which contribute to fostering trust and acceptance among stakeholders.

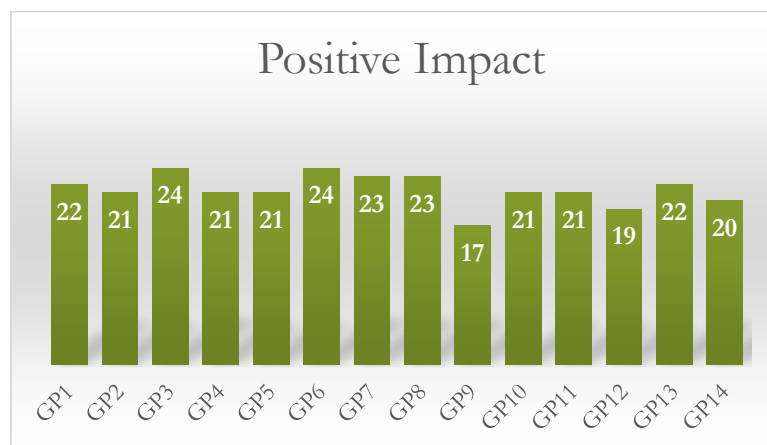


Figure 6 Positive impact on the social acceptance of initiatives in the raw materials sector

Additionally, GP7 (Restoration plan at Las Navas mining project) and GP8 (Life Turn to e-circular) also receive high scores for their positive impact on social acceptance. These practices, like GP3 and GP6, emphasize aspects such as environmental restoration and sustainable resource management, which agree with local communities' concerns.

However, it's noteworthy that GP9, which is about Lignite Research and Exploitation Rights Special Fees as a giveback provision to the community of Kozani, received the lowest score for its potential impact on social acceptance. This suggests that while financial contributions may be important, they are not sufficient to generate social acceptance if other critical aspects such as community engagement, environmental stewardship, and compliance with regulations are not considered.

The findings emphasise the significance of integrating community perspectives, environmental considerations, and regulatory compliance in enhancing social acceptance in the raw materials sector. Transparency, sustainability, and community benefits are perceived positively by local stakeholders, facilitating smoother project implementation. The findings highlight the need for holistic methods that meet legislative requirements, engage communities, promote environmental stewardship, and contribute to sustainable development.

Transferability

The analysis of transferability provides critical insights into how the identified good practices can be applied and adapted across various partnership countries or regions.

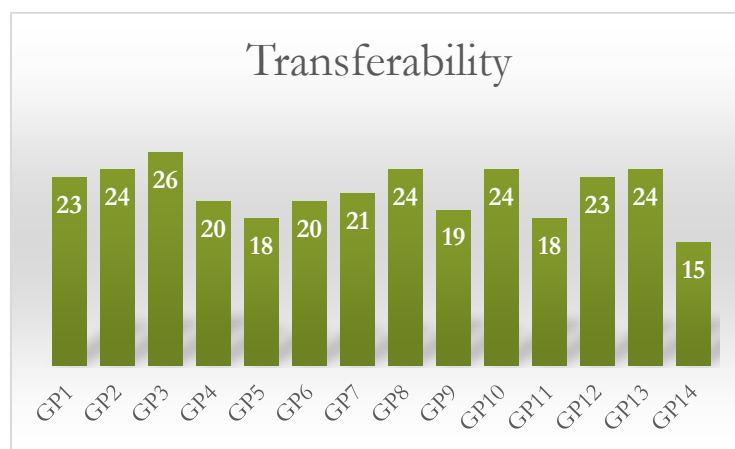


Figure 7 Extent of transferability of the identified good practices to other partnership countries or regions.

The key factors influencing transferability, based on the findings include:

- *Cross-sectoral cooperation and engagement:* The GP3 practice emerged as the most promising for potential transferability to other regions. It prioritizes cross-sectoral collaboration, engaging municipal politicians, mining authorities, national and state agencies, and key stakeholders from the recycling industry. This collaborative approach facilitates the sharing of resources, knowledge, and best practices, making it adaptable to different contexts. Practices that promote dialogue and engagement across various sectors tend to be more transferable because they foster cooperation and consensus-building, essential for overcoming local challenges.
- *Awareness building and stakeholder involvement:* Effective awareness-raising campaigns and robust stakeholder participation are essential for transferability. Practices that prioritise community participation, such as GP3, successfully stimulate public interest and political attention. This widespread participation guarantees that methods are not only accepted but also promoted by local communities, which is critical for their successful implementation in a variety of settings.

- *Adaptability to regulatory environments:* GP3, for example, emphasises the significance of ensuring continuous and safe supplies of critical raw materials while exhibiting adaptability in navigating varied regulatory environments. Practices that can be adjusted to multiple legal and regulatory environments are more likely to be accepted and implemented successfully in other areas.
- *Economic sustainability:* Economic sustainability-focused approaches, such as GP3, which encourages sustainable raw material extraction and processing, are more transferable. Economic benefits provide strong incentives for adoption since they are aligned with the financial objectives of many different stakeholders. Demonstrating economic viability ensures that initiatives are not only viable, but also desired in different settings.
- *Specific Local Conditions:* Conversely, practices such as GP14, which were rated as the least transferable, highlight the importance of the local settings. Practices that rely heavily on distinct local characteristics or specific cultural, economic, or environmental considerations might face difficulties when implemented elsewhere. Understanding these local complications is critical for changing and adapting such approaches to fit novel settings.
- *Knowledge Exchange and Innovation:* Practices that promote knowledge exchange and innovation, such as those identified in GP2, GP8, GP10, and GP13, have characteristics that increase their transferability. These methods contribute to local capacity building and sustainable development by facilitating learning and adaptation. The ability to share knowledge and develop ensures that techniques remain relevant and effective as they transfer across regions.

Focusing on these aspects can improve worldwide adoption of sustainable practices, increase stakeholder participation, and promote the raw materials sector's sustainability. Understanding and resolving these issues ensures that good practices are successfully implemented and have a wide-ranging influence across different contexts.

Alignment with the EU principles

Examining the correlation between the identified good practices and EU principles offers crucial insights into their alignment with the EU's sustainability objectives and directives. Practices that closely adhere to EU principles are poised to advance the EU's sustainability agenda, fostering public engagement, environmental protection, and responsible resource management. Prioritizing these principles not only addresses community concerns but also cultivates trust and collaboration, crucial for sustainably managing raw materials resources. The results indicate a varying degree of alignment between the identified good practices and the principles outlined by the European Union (EU).

Among the practices, GP3, GP5, GP6, and GP8 stand out for their close alignment with EU principles. These practices excel in promoting resource efficiency, which focuses on optimizing resource use, minimizing waste, and enhancing recycling, all key elements of the EU's circular economy strategy. This approach not only conserves resources but also lessens environmental impact. Additionally, by embracing circular economy principles, these practices ensure that materials are reused and recycled, reducing the need for new raw materials and promoting sustainable consumption and production.

Public engagement is another critical area where these practices align with EU principles. They prioritize public participation and stakeholder engagement, ensuring that communities are involved in decision-making processes. This aligns with the EU's emphasis on transparency and inclusiveness, making these practices highly effective in building community support and trust. Their strong alignment with EU principles indicates that they can significantly contribute to sustainable development and responsible resource management within partner states.

On the other hand, practices like GP9 and GP11 show less alignment with EU principles. These practices often lack comprehensive measures to ensure environmental protection and resource efficiency, making them less compatible with EU sustainability standards. They may also struggle with public engagement, failing to prioritize transparency and stakeholder involvement, which are crucial for gaining community trust and support. Furthermore, when economic gains are prioritised over environmental and social impacts, these practices may not align well with the EU's balanced approach to sustainable development.

To enhance the alignment and social acceptance of these practices, several strategies can be adopted. Refining and adapting practices like GP9 and GP11 to include stronger sustainability measures, such as improved waste management and resource efficiency, can help align them better with EU standards. Increasing efforts to involve the community in decision-making processes can foster greater transparency and trust, ensuring that stakeholder concerns are addressed. Balancing economic benefits with environmental sustainability is crucial, demonstrating that practices contribute to economic growth while protecting natural resources and promoting social well-being. Raising awareness about the benefits of sustainable practices within the critical raw materials sector and the importance of aligning with EU principles can also help gain public support, with educational campaigns and informational sessions highlighting the long-term advantages of sustainable resource management.

Overall ranking of good practices The following table presents a comprehensive ranking of these practices. Each entry includes the total rank, a unique identifier for the good practice (GP No), the title of the initiative, and the partner organization responsible for its implementation.

| CLASS | TOTAL RANK | GP No | TITLE | PARTNER |
|-------|------------|-------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | 25 | GP3 | To raise awareness of the importance of security of supply of critical raw materials in Denmark | Mun. Frederikshavn Denmark |
| 2 | 24 | GP8 | LIFE Turn to e-circular | BSC Slovenia |
| 3 | 23 | GP10 | Open dialogue procedure of Municipality of Kozani, regarding Environmental Impact | MunKoz Greece |
| 4 | 23 | GP13 | School reward program for batteries collection | MunKoz Greece |
| 5 | 22 | GP6 | Las Navas mining project | FUNDECYT-PCTEX Spain |
| 6 | 22 | GP7 | Aguablanca Mine | FUNDECYT-PCTEX Spain |
| 7 | 22 | GP1 | Consultation & Annual Open Days | RSE Greece |
| 8 | 22 | GP2 | Tourist and educational destination "Vagonetto" | RSE Greece |
| 9 | 21 | GP12 | Reforestation | MunKoz Greece |
| 10 | 20 | GP11 | Public Power Corporation Policy on employment of local population | MunKoz Greece |
| 11 | 20 | GP4 | Valea Jiului Development Society Project | ADR-BI Romania |
| 12 | 20 | GP5 | Web-based industrial accident notification system Baia Mare Aurul Gold Mine | ADR-BI Romania |
| 13 | 19 | GP9 | Lignite Research and Exploitation Rights Special Fee | MunKoz Greece |
| 14 | 18 | GP14 | Foundation of Department of Mineral Resources Engineering of the University of Western Macedonia | MunKoz Greece |

Table 1 Evaluation table of good practices

Public engagement strategies in the raw material sector

The analysis of good practices in the raw materials sector reveals important insights into effective public engagement, highlighting common strategies and unique regional challenges. This section explores the lessons learned from the territorial survey, focusing on the critical elements of transparency, early engagement, and community involvement, while also addressing the specific obstacles and opportunities present in different regional contexts.

Regional variations and commonalities in public engagement

The survey identified both common features and differences in public engagement and implementation of good practices across partner territories. Common features included moderate public involvement, environmental concerns as the main cause of social opposition, and a significant role for companies and the private sector. Despite regional variations, prevalent forms of engagement included open dialogues, educational campaigns, and community contributions. Key success factors such as transparency and early engagement were universally important for building trust and stakeholder involvement.

Differences emerged from unique regional challenges related to socio-economic factors, governance structures, and historical contexts. Engagement methods also differed based on regional priorities and resource availability. Key success factors, while universally important, are more effective when adapted to local cultural norms, stakeholder dynamics, and initiative specifics.

Understanding these regional variations allows stakeholders to better plan public engagement and implement best practices effectively, ensuring initiatives are adopted, sustained, and supported by the communities they aim to benefit.

Partners' identified solutions to territorial issues

Based on partner feedback, addressing regional partner issues requires customized strategies that foster community engagement, sustainability promotion, and transparency enhancement. The strategies identified by partners in response to regional challenges are the ones below.

Social Issues:

Addressing social concerns involves fostering community engagement and transparency. Some effective strategies include:

- *Community consultation:* Hosting regular consultation events and satisfaction surveys can ensure community voices are heard and provide companies with direct feedback on issues such as displacement and cultural heritage loss.
- *Open dialogue procedures:* Implementing open-dialogue mechanisms allows local populations to express their views on environmental and social impacts. This transparent process helps involve the community in decision-making and address concerns about displacement and cultural heritage.

Environmental Issues:

Effective practices towards sustainability and minimizing environmental impact include:

- *Green mining principles:* Prioritise environmental sustainability by addressing issues like flora and fauna disruption, water contamination, and landscape damage. Modernising operations and adhering to strict environmental

regulations can reduce environmental impact and gain community acceptance.

- *Reforestation efforts*: Mandating reforestation efforts ensures the restoration of natural habitats and mitigates environmental damage, addressing concerns about landscape degradation and loss of biodiversity.
- *Accident notification systems*: Implementing prompt notification systems for industrial accidents enhances transparency and addresses public concerns about air pollution and industrial safety.

Economic and Governance Issues

Effective strategies for enhancing transparency, community benefits, and economic sustainability include:

- *Transparency in supply chains*: Raising awareness and fostering cross-sectoral cooperation increases transparency in the supply chain of critical raw materials, addressing public concerns about decision-making processes and emphasizing the economic importance of sustainable supply.
- *Community development fees*: Allocating fees collected from raw materials production to local governments for development projects ensures that local communities benefit economically from resource extraction, enhancing transparency and local investment.
- *Local employment policies*: Prioritizing the employment of the local population ensures that the economic benefits of raw materials extraction are shared with the community, addressing concerns about local economic impacts and supporting workforce development.

Other issues that are being addressed:

Effective approaches for addressing issues that do not belong to one of the above categories include:

- *Repurposing old mining sites*: The conversion of former mining sites into multipurpose communal spaces, such as tourist and educational attractions, bridges the industry-public gap, fosters cultural appreciation, generates economic benefits through tourism, and solves social and environmental issues. This strategy brings together a variety of stakeholders, overcomes societal resistance, and improves community involvement while promoting collaboration.
- *E-waste reduction initiatives*: Implementing programs that reduce e-waste through community engagement and educational campaigns addresses environmental concerns about resource use and waste management. Promoting reuse and recycling enhances public participation and environmental sustainability.

Lessons learnt/ conclusions from the territorial survey on the public engagement in the raw materials sector.

The survey on public engagement in the raw materials sector highlights the importance of transparent communication, community involvement, environmental stewardship, economic incentives, and cultural respect for building trust and reducing opposition, ensuring sustainable raw materials extraction projects. More specifically:

1. Transparent communication with local communities is essential for building trust and reducing opposition. Governments and companies should mandate regular, transparent channels to keep communities informed and involved, promoting open dialogues, feedback mechanisms, and transparent decision-making processes.
2. Community involvement in decision-making promotes ownership and collaboration, resulting in greater acceptability and cooperation. Public policies should require community participation in raw material project planning and decision-making procedures.
3. Environmental concerns are a significant source of public opposition. Proactive measures such as reforestation projects, sustainable mining practices, and comprehensive environmental impact assessments help address these concerns. Environmental regulations should enforce strict sustainability practices and require comprehensive impact assessments for all projects.
4. Ensuring that local communities benefit economically from raw materials extraction is essential. Policies that prioritize local employment and provide economic incentives directly support community livelihoods and reduce opposition. Economic policies should incentivize local employment and ensure that a portion of the economic benefits from resource extraction is reinvested into the community.
5. Educational and cultural initiatives that highlight the history and importance of mining can help bridge the gap between the industry and the public. Educational programs and cultural projects should be integrated into the public engagement strategies of raw materials projects.
6. Implementing technological solutions, such as industrial accident notification systems, can enhance safety, transparency, and public trust. Innovation in monitoring and communication tools helps address public concerns more effectively. Investment in technological innovations should be prioritized to improve safety and transparency in the sector.
7. Long-term commitment to CSR practices, including health, education, and social initiatives, fosters positive community relations and gains public support. Policies should encourage or mandate long-term CSR commitments from companies involved in raw materials extraction.

The results emphasize the importance of a holistic approach to public engagement in the raw materials sector, incorporating transparency, environmental stewardship, economic benefits, and cultural respect. It suggests that successful projects address multiple facets of community concerns, from economic impacts to environmental sustainability.

The survey highlights the importance of adaptability and customisation in engagement strategies, as their effectiveness varies depending on local contexts. It emphasizes the need for continuous dialogue with local communities, participation in planning processes, and aligning projects with broader sustainability goals. The survey suggests that successful public engagement in the raw materials sector requires a comprehensive, transparent, and inclusive approach, which should be reflected in public policies to promote sustainable and community-supported projects.

SUGGESTIONS FOR POLICY IMPROVEMENTS

Taking into consideration the analysis of the survey results along with the existing regulatory frameworks within the territories of RAW4RES partners and considering the needs and priorities of RAWRES partners, the following improvements are being proposed. These initiatives aim to cultivate sustainable practices and increase public engagement in the extraction and processing of raw materials through the promotion of participatory processes and effective dispute resolution mechanisms.

- Enhance transparency and accessibility: Ensuring that regulatory processes and decisions related to raw materials extraction and processing are transparent and easily accessible to the public. This includes establishing user-friendly online platforms where stakeholders can access relevant information such as project proposals, environmental impact assessments, and regulatory permits.
- Incorporate early engagement requirements: To facilitate meaningful stakeholder participation, mandating early engagement during the planning stages of raw materials projects is proposed. This entails comprehensive consultations and impact assessments with affected communities, NGOs, and local authorities before initiating any extraction or processing activities.
- Facilitate meaningful public participation: Developing clear guidelines and standards for meaningful public participation in decision-making processes ensures that stakeholders have ample opportunities to provide input and feedback, which can be collected through mechanisms such as public hearings, comment periods, and community forums.
- Promote collaborative conflict resolution: The establishment of formal dispute resolution mechanisms, such as mediation or arbitration processes, to address conflicts and disputes that may arise between stakeholders in the raw materials sector is essential. Additionally, the use of collaborative problem-solving techniques, such as consensus-building and negotiation, to find mutually acceptable solutions is proposed.
- Foster capacity building and awareness: It is essential to provide training and capacity-building programs for local communities to enhance their understanding of regulatory processes and participatory mechanisms. Furthermore, public awareness campaigns can educate citizens about their rights, responsibilities, and opportunities for engagement in the raw materials sector.
- Ensure adequate representation and inclusivity: Promoting diversity and inclusivity in decision-making bodies and regulatory processes to ensure that all citizens are represented, and their voices are heard. This includes establishing mechanisms to address power imbalances and ensure equitable participation, particularly for marginalized or vulnerable communities affected by raw materials projects.

- Encourage collaboration and partnerships: Fostering collaboration and partnerships among the public and the government agencies, industry stakeholders, civil society organizations, and academic institutions. Multi-stakeholder platforms or working groups can facilitate open dialogue, knowledge sharing, and collective problem-solving to address common challenges in the raw materials sector.

By implementing these strategies, the raw materials sector can enhance public engagement, promote sustainable practices, and ensure that the benefits of resource extraction are shared with local communities.