



FORM BEST PRACTICES CONTEST 2026

Municipality Finike Municipality Country TÜRKİYE

Contact person Mrs. Ayşegül AYDEMİR Telephone
+905398976790

E-mail aysegul.aydemir@finike.bel.tr

Name project

Project of Strengthening Finike's Resilience Against Earthquakes and Flood Disasters Through University–Public–Civil Society Cooperation

Category Certification Criteria: mark the category of your project

- ☐ Energy and environmental policies (politiche energetiche e ambientali);
- ☐ Infrastructure policies (politiche infrastrutturali);
- ☒ Quality of urban life policies (politiche per la qualità urbana);
- ☐ Agricultural, touristic and artisan policies (politiche agricole, turistiche, artigianali);
- ☐ Policies for hospitality, awareness and training (politiche per l'ospitalità, la consapevolezza e la formazione);
- ☐ Social cohesion (coesione sociale).

Summary project

The "Project of Strengthening Finike's Resilience Against Earthquakes and Flood Disasters Through University–Public–Civil Society Cooperation" is a comprehensive local governance and capacity-building project developed under the European Union-funded Civil Participation Grant Program, aiming to strengthen not only physical but also social, institutional and community resilience against disasters. The project was implemented with the aim of establishing a sustainable local disaster preparedness model specifically for Finike, taking into consideration the increasing disaster risks related to climate change in recent years, the more frequent occurrence of floods and inundations in the Mediterranean basin, and Türkiye's earthquake reality.

In the project carried out under the coordination of UMESKO, the project owner, Finike Municipality actively took part as the co-applicant (mandatory project partner). Akdeniz University, AFAD, Finike District Governorship, Finike Chamber of Agriculture, ADOS, KADOK, Yesevi Movement Association, local civil society organizations, volunteer teams, academics and representatives from different fields of expertise also contributed to the project process. In this respect, the project established a participatory and multi-stakeholder governance model in which universities, public institutions, local governments and civil society acted together towards a common goal.

Finike is a district that has vulnerable characteristics in terms of both earthquakes and floods due to its coastal structure, agricultural production areas, stream beds and rural neighborhoods. Within the scope of the project, first of all, local needs regarding the district's disaster risks were evaluated; deficiencies in inter-institutional coordination, volunteering capacity, the level of disaster awareness and structural problems that may arise during crises were analyzed. In line with the data obtained, a community-based disaster management approach was adopted and activities prioritizing the active participation of local people in the process were planned.

Throughout the project, disaster awareness seminars, training programs, coordination meetings, workshops, field practices and public awareness activities were carried out. In particular, through the trainings conducted on the AFAD volunteering system, the more active participation of young



people, women and local volunteer groups in disaster preparedness processes was encouraged. Topics such as basic disaster awareness, first response processes, coordination during crises, safe evacuation, post-disaster social solidarity and volunteer organization were addressed during the trainings.

Through the workshops and coordination meetings organized within the scope of the project, it was aimed to increase the capacity of different institutions to act together during disasters. During these meetings, local governments, academics, public institutions and civil society representatives came together to evaluate disaster scenarios specific to Finike; and carried out studies on inter-institutional task sharing, communication mechanisms and joint intervention models. Thus, the understanding that disaster management should be based not only on a central structure but also on a strong coordination structure at the local level was developed. The Disaster Training and Coordination Center, one of the most important outputs of the project, was designed not as a temporary facility serving only during the project period, but as a sustainable center for a long-term local resilience approach. Through the center, it was aimed to ensure the continuity of disaster trainings, to institutionalize volunteer activities, to organize joint meetings and to conduct coordination more effectively during crises. At the same time, a cooperation model was developed for the shared use of the center by all stakeholder institutions, and inter-institutional protocol processes were carried out accordingly.

Within the scope of the project, institutional protocols were also prepared in order to strengthen cooperation among public institutions, local governments, universities and civil society organizations. Through these protocols, a sustainable basis was established for joint action in pre-disaster preparedness, disaster response and post-disaster recovery processes. Thus, it was aimed to establish a permanent and institutionalized local cooperation network that is not limited only to the project period.

The project did not address disaster management solely as a technical issue; it also placed elements such as social solidarity, social inclusiveness, volunteering culture and participatory governance at the center of the process. Particular importance was given to raising awareness regarding the protection of citizens living in rural neighborhoods, elderly individuals, women, children and vulnerable groups against disasters. In this respect, the project developed an inclusive local resilience approach involving all segments of society in the process.

The project also directly overlaps with the fundamental principles of the Cittaslow International approach. The Cittaslow philosophy aims not only for a calm way of life, but also for becoming safe, resilient, participatory and sustainable cities. Through this project, important steps have been taken in Finike towards improving quality of life, strengthening social solidarity, enhancing local participation and creating a more disaster-resilient urban structure. It is considered that this model, based on university–public–civil society cooperation, constitutes an applicable and exemplary best practice model for other Cittaslow cities facing similar risks.

Goal project

The main objective of the project is to increase the institutional, social and local resilience of the Finike district against earthquakes, floods and climate-related disasters; and to establish a sustainable, participatory and inclusive disaster preparedness model based on university–public–civil society cooperation.

Accordingly, the project aimed to establish a strong and sustainable coordination mechanism in disaster management among local governments, public institutions, universities, civil society organizations and volunteer structures; to improve community-based disaster awareness; to increase volunteering capacity; and to promote the culture of acting together during crises. Within the scope of the project, basic disaster volunteer trainings, support AFAD volunteer trainings and practical field search-and-rescue trainings were organized for citizens living in Finike in order to strengthen the local disaster response capacity. At the end of this process, it was



aimed to establish a disaster volunteer network consisting of at least 180 trained, organized individuals equipped with basic equipment infrastructure in the district. In addition, it was planned to conduct training and awareness-raising activities for engineers, architects and similar technical professional groups working in the district on proactive disaster measures, risk reduction strategies, safe construction, pre-disaster preparedness and crisis management. Thus, not only post-disaster intervention, but also the development of local technical capacity aimed at reducing disaster risks in advance was among the primary objectives of the project.

One of the important objectives of the project is to establish a fully equipped Disaster Training and Coordination Center in Finike. It was aimed that this center would operate actively not only during the project period but also after the completion of the project; and serve as a sustainable shared-use space for disaster trainings, coordination meetings, volunteer activities and inter-institutional cooperation activities.

Within the scope of the project, seminars, workshops, information meetings and awareness activities were also organized in order to strengthen the culture of civil participation and to ensure the more active involvement of society in local decision-making processes. Through these activities, it was aimed to promote the understanding that disaster management is not a process carried out solely under the responsibility of public institutions, but can become stronger and more sustainable through the active participation of local people, volunteers and civil society organizations.

One of the most important objectives of the project was also to strengthen the institutional sustainability of the civil society organizations participating in the project. In this regard, it was aimed to increase the visibility of the NGOs involved in the project, support the recruitment of new members and volunteers, encourage young people to participate in volunteering activities, and develop an active culture of civil participation at the local level. Thus, the understanding that resilience against disasters can be achieved not only through physical infrastructure, but also through a strong, organized and active civil society structure, was taken as a basis.

In addition, a sustainable cooperation protocol was prepared among the project partner institutions, public organizations and civil society organizations in order to ensure joint action during disaster situations, and it was aimed to make institutional solidarity permanent. Through this cooperation model, it was aimed to develop a culture of joint action in pre-disaster preparedness, disaster-time coordination and post-disaster recovery processes.

The project also presents a local resilience model that is directly related to the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. In particular, it supports many sustainable development goals, especially:

- Goal 11: Sustainable Cities and Communities,
- Goal 13: Climate Action,
- Goal 17: Partnerships for the Goals.

Through the project, it was aimed to reduce disaster risks, strengthen local capacity, establish community-based volunteer networks and develop multi-stakeholder governance structures.

In addition, this project directly serves the enhancement of quality of life, social resilience, participatory local governance, social cohesion, sustainable urban policies and the strengthening of local communities, which are among the fundamental elements of the Cittaslow approach. Through the project, it was aimed not only to establish an urban structure in Finike that is



prepared for disasters, but also to develop a safer, more solidaristic, disaster- and risk-aware, conscious and sustainable culture of living.

In this respect, the project approaches disaster management not only as a technical process focused on moments of crisis, but also as a holistic practice that improves quality of life, strengthens social solidarity and enhances local governance.

Result project

As a result of the activities carried out within the scope of the project, concrete and measurable outputs were achieved towards strengthening local resilience against disasters in Finike. In line with the project implemented under the European Union-funded Civil Participation Grant Program; a sustainable cooperation network was established among local governments, universities, public institutions and civil society organizations, and a significant contribution was made to strengthening the understanding of participatory governance in disaster management.

Within the scope of the basic disaster volunteer trainings, support AFAD volunteer trainings and practical search-and-rescue activities carried out throughout the project, more than 180 volunteers received direct training; and a local volunteer capacity that is organized, trained and equipped with basic equipment infrastructure to take part during disasters was established in the district. Young people, women, technical personnel and citizens from different age groups actively participated in the training processes.

Seminars, workshops, technical training programs, coordination meetings and field practices were organized in order to increase disaster awareness. In this context, especially through the seminar titled "The Role of Civil Participation in Disasters", citizens were informed about the importance of civil participation in disaster management; and the critical role of the culture of volunteering in building a disaster-resilient society was emphasized.

Within the workshops carried out under the project, SWOT analyses regarding earthquake, flood and climate-related disaster risks in Finike and its surroundings were conducted; and the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the district were evaluated through a multi-stakeholder participation model. During the workshop process, special working tables were also established based on different disaster scenarios; and solution proposals for possible crisis scenarios were developed by public institutions, academics, technical experts, civil society representatives and volunteers.

The evaluations conducted at the working tables, panelist opinions, technical analyses and field recommendations were compiled in detail and comprehensive workshop reports were prepared. These reports were prepared not only for use at the local level; but were also submitted to relevant ministries and public institutions to be evaluated during the development processes of disaster management and local resilience policies. Thus, it was aimed that the field data and local experiences obtained within the scope of the project would provide a basis for national policy updates.

Through the technical trainings carried out within the scope of the project, capacity-building activities were conducted for engineers, architects and technical experts on proactive disaster measures, risk reduction strategies, safe construction, crisis management and pre-disaster preparedness. In this way, not only post-disaster intervention but also the enhancement of local technical awareness aimed at reducing disaster risks in advance was ensured.

Through the fully equipped Disaster Training and Coordination Center established within the project, a permanent disaster training and coordination infrastructure was brought to Finike. The center was structured as a sustainable facility with shared-use capacity for disaster trainings, volunteering activities, coordination meetings, field planning and inter-institutional cooperation processes. Thanks to the center, which is planned to continue operating actively after the completion of the project, the continuity of disaster preparedness activities in the district has been ensured.

During the project process, a sustainable cooperation protocol was developed among Finike Municipality, Akdeniz University, AFAD, Finike District Governorship, Finike Chamber of



Agriculture, ADOS, KADOK, Yesevi Movement Association and other stakeholder institutions; and the institutional coordination capacity for acting jointly in pre-disaster preparedness, disaster response and post-disaster recovery processes was strengthened.

In addition, thanks to the project activities, the visibility of local civil society organizations increased; the recruitment of new volunteers and members was supported; and especially the active participation of young people in civil society and disaster volunteering processes was encouraged. Thus, the project produced important outcomes not only in the field of disaster management, but also in terms of expanding the culture of civil participation and strengthening the sustainability of local civil society.

As a result of all these outputs obtained, not only a disaster response capacity was developed in Finike; but also a sustainable urban resilience model supporting social solidarity, participatory governance, volunteering culture and quality of life was established. In this respect, the project has become an exemplary best practice model directly contributing to the principles of quality of life, social resilience and sustainable local governance promoted by the Cittaslow International approach.

Finance (costs and benefits)

The total budget of the project was €129,091.11, and the entire budget was financed by the European Union under the Civic Engagement Grant Program.

Staff (staff involved and use of time)

Within the scope of the project, a professional project team consisting of 10 people was involved, including:

- 1 Project General Coordinator,
- 1 Project Technical Coordinator,
- 2 Coordinator Assistants,
- 1 Accountant,
- 1 Education Representative,
- 4 Communication Representatives.

The aforementioned personnel were assigned by the project partner institutions and organizations and worked full-time for 12 months throughout the project period.

Additional information (if necessarily)

Start and End Dates of the Project and Completion Rate:

Project Start Date: 06.01.2025

Project End Date: 25.03.2026

Project Completion Rate: 100%

The project was completed in accordance with the planned activity schedule; and training activities, workshops, seminars, field practices, volunteer trainings, cooperation protocols and the establishment of the Disaster Training and Coordination Center were successfully carried out. In addition, the targeted volunteer capacity was achieved within the scope of the project and sustainable institutional cooperation mechanisms were established.

Applicability of the Project by Other Municipalities:

The project constitutes a sustainable and exemplary local resilience model that can be implemented by municipalities and local governments of different scales. Especially in settlements facing risks related to earthquakes, floods, climate-related disasters and crisis management, this participatory model developed on the basis of university–public–civil society cooperation can similarly be implemented.

One of the strongest aspects of the project is that, rather than relying on high-cost physical investments, it has a structure that strengthens local coordination capacity, volunteering culture, civil participation and institutional cooperation. This enables municipalities with different budgetary and population scales to adapt the project according to their own local needs.



Within the scope of the model; components such as basic disaster volunteer trainings, support AFAD volunteering processes, search-and-rescue trainings, workshops and scenario analyses, SWOT evaluations, technical capacity development activities, sustainable cooperation protocols, and disaster training and coordination centers can be implemented in a modular manner. In particular, the multi-stakeholder working table model, disaster scenario analyses and inter-institutional coordination approach used in the workshops carried out within the scope of the project are among the practices that can directly serve as examples for other municipalities. The sharing of the prepared workshop reports and policy recommendations with relevant public institutions and ministries also enabled the model to contribute to broader governance processes rather than remaining only at the local scale.

Another important aspect of the project in terms of applicability is the active involvement of civil society organizations in the process and the strengthening of volunteering capacity. Thanks to this approach, disaster management has transformed from being solely institutionally intervention-based into an inclusive model prioritizing community-based resilience. Especially for small- and medium-scale municipalities, this approach has the potential to produce high social impact at low cost.

The established Disaster Training and Coordination Center model is also a sustainable practice that can be taken as an example by other municipalities. Thanks to these centers, which can continue to be actively used after the completion of the project, the continuity of training activities, volunteer organization and inter-institutional coordination can be sustained in the long term.

With these aspects, the project constitutes an applicable exemplary best practice model for all municipalities aiming to improve quality of life, strengthen social resilience and develop participatory local governance, especially for cities that are members of Cittaslow International.

A video regarding the trainings, seminars and workshops carried out within the scope of our project can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C6qUxeKbHSo>

Link website

<https://www.finite.bel.tr/tr/projeler/universite-kamu-sivil-toplum-isbirliginde-finite-nin-deprem-ve-sel-felaketine-karsi-direncinin-artti>

(if available)

Once filled in this form please send it to: info@cittaslow.net

- Participation Deadline, 19 May 2026-