



CITIES
IN ACTION
STORIES
OF CHANGE



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URBACT III, December 2018

CITIES IN ACTION STORIES OF CHANGE



Foreword



I am always inspired when I see successful urban projects in different parts of Europe. If inspiring changes are possible in some cities, why not in all? European cities may have different history, size, assets and challenges, but they all have something to learn from each other through city-to-city cooperation.

Since 2002, important transformations at local level have been happening thanks to organised networking and capacity-building put in place by the EU Cohesion Policy's URBACT programme.

Thanks to their participation in URBACT Action Planning networks, hundreds of cities across Europe have been able to exchange good practices, produce integrated plans with local stakeholders and citizens, and ultimately improve the lives of their population.

This magazine unfolds a handful of **success stories of URBACT cities that have driven local change**. It is about cities that have dared to experiment, that have succeeded in achieving results in the fields of social inclusion, economic development, urban planning, or greener ways of living.

Whatever the angle they have chosen to work on, there are at least two main lessons to be drawn from their URBACT adventure.

First, the proof that **when Europe and city administrations empower citizens** to shape their future, **policies become more inclusive and are more impactful** over time. Take for example the Romanian city of Slatina with its 70 000 inhabitants. Through its involvement in URBACT, the municipality co-designed a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan together with security services, educational representatives, NGOs, businesses, media and citizens. Thanks to almost 20 million euros of EU funding, the city intends to double the use of public transport in the next decade, to use hybrid buses, improve the road system and create a new transport management system for a healthier, low-carbon environment.

The second lesson is that **city administrations and staff**, thanks to their exchanges with their EU city peers, **become more experienced and effective in dealing with urban challenges**. Cēsis for example, a town of 18 000 people in Latvia, joined URBACT to boost digital education and entrepreneurship. Inspired by innovative actions implemented by bigger EU cities, Cēsis put forward an impressive Action Plan for Digital Growth 2022.

This is why **cooperation between cities** and **local empowerment** are two major components of the Urban Agenda for the EU, and of the New Urban Agenda adopted in Quito in October 2016.

As policy-makers, **it is of our interest to open up and enrich the culture of our public administrations**. City-to-city cooperation is the best way to facilitate exchange, adaptation, implementation and upscaling of good practices all over the world, while bottom-up, participatory policy-making brings long-lasting results, transparency and increased trust in our local governments.

While paving the way for the future cohesion policy, it is our duty to ensure that cooperation and peoples' empowerment are not just buzzwords but a reality for our cities. We owe it to them and to our fellow citizens.

City-to-city cooperation is the best way to facilitate exchange, adaptation, implementation and upscaling of good practices all over the world.

Corina Crețu, EU Commissioner for Regional and Urban Policy

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URBACT, an opportunity for action and change

Since 2002, more than 1 000 EU cities involved in URBACT have experienced the added value of transnational cooperation, the transfer of good practices beyond national borders, and the participatory approach to policy-making. URBACT continues to bring cities together with a new call for Action Planning networks early 2019. This is how it helps cities drive local change.

◆ The 'URBACT method'

EU and UN reports have been putting light for years now on chronic, ongoing and upcoming challenges and prospects for cities. Urban challenges like unemployment, population decline, falling public investment, the influx of migrants and the digitalisation of society push cities all over Europe to reinvent their mode of operation.

A different way to reach prosperity, well-being and growth in a city is by rethinking the governance model city administrations have previously adopted and by moving away from a command and control role to the role of facilitator. This requires trusted relationships between local elected representatives, city staff and citizens and an empowerment of local stakeholders in the co-design and implementation of local policies. And it is precisely at this juncture that URBACT comes in.

URBACT calls for integrated urban development and for its principles of horizontal and vertical policy integration. These principles draw from the integrated approach to urban development used since the beginning of the millennium, with important steps like the 2007 Leipzig Charter as well as the Pact of Amsterdam and New Urban Agenda signed in 2016.

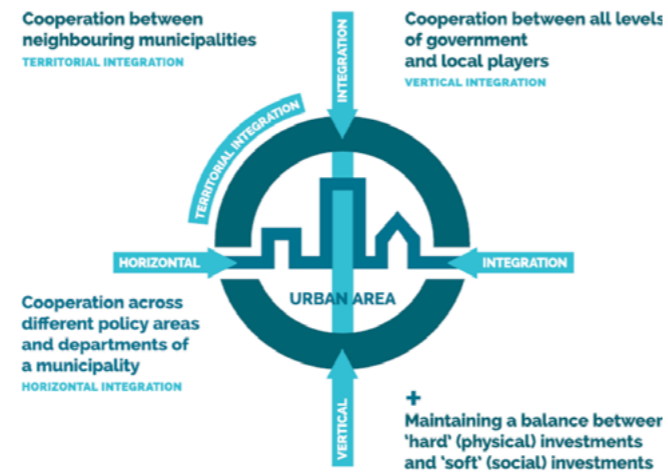
The horizontal integration of policies within a city requires the various municipal services and local agencies to work together closely. Therefore, a project to build a site to host activities must be designed and implemented by incorporating planning (choice of site), environmental, social (training, employment measures) and economic (support to business) aspects. Vertical integration puts the focus on a co-production of policies and actions with the local stakeholders concerned (inhabitants, associations, public and private-sector partners) but also with the competent higher level authorities, regional and/or national.

To embed these principles in city administrations across Europe, URBACT has developed a series of processes and tools, also named as the 'URBACT method'. This allows an environment that favours learning through practice. The building blocks of this method are:

- **Networking amongst EU cities** to exchange good practices and find solutions to their challenges. There are currently three types of networks to meet different needs: the Action

Integrated Urban Development

MEANS...



Planning networks for cities willing to develop an Integrated Action Plan for their city; the Transfer networks for cities willing to adapt and transfer an already existing good to their local context; and the Implementation networks for cities that have an integrated strategy/action plan but want to tackle the challenges they face during implementation. Networks facilitate the exchange and working process for city staff and local stakeholders through study visits, transnational workshops and peer-reviews. A network involves a Lead Partner city and up to 11 Project Partners that are supported by URBACT experts (see below).

- **Participatory approach to urban development** since city administrations involved in URBACT networks set up URBACT Local Groups, composed of representatives of social, economic, environmental sectors (city staff, NGOs, SMEs, universities, citizens, and other stakeholders). Their objective is to find solutions to the needs and local challenges for which the city has joined a network. These stakeholders also benefit from networking activities described above.
- **Production and implementation of Integrated Action Plans** following networking and involvement of local stakeholders. This is a co-production process resulting from the exchange of good practices and ideas with EU partner cities and from meetings of the URBACT Local Groups who take up these practices and adapt them in their cities.



URBACT City Festival, Lisbon 2018

- **Expert support** to the cities involved in URBACT networks, 100% funded by URBACT. The experts, who are selected by the networks themselves, support the cities in terms of methodology and thematic knowledge.
- **Capacity-building** and trainings for urban practitioners to design, transfer and implement integrated practices and strategies in a participatory way. URBACT has developed Summer Universities, bringing together hundreds of URBACT cities (urban practitioners/professionals), to enhance their skills in developing Integrated Action Plans with local stakeholders. In complement to these Universities, the programme develops national trainings, webinars and guides on specific topics.
- **Applying a "result framework"** to define expected results and impact of the Integrated Action Plan at local level, including defining milestones, result and output indicators, and monitoring progress.
- **Capitalisation and communication of knowledge** and practices for the benefit of URBACT and non URBACT cities. URBACT has put several means in place to accomplish this: from the URBACT website, social media, articles, publications, workshops, Policy Labs, URBACT City Festivals, National URBACT Points who communicate in national languages in their countries, to linking and sharing knowledge with the partnerships of the Urban Agenda for the EU, and other organisations working on urban development (CEMR, EURO CITIES, UN-HABITAT, etc).
- **Support from the URBACT Secretariat, National URBACT Points and Programme Experts.**

Just from 2014 to 2018 URBACT has financed 20 Action-Planning networks gathering 205 cities from all over Europe. Thanks to the URBACT method, these cities have empowered local stakeholders through URBACT Local Groups to co-produce Integrated Action Plans. More than 66% of these URBACT cities had their Integrated Action Plan approved, nearly 50% secured funding for it, and more than 80% of them have already started implementing it. The city stories and testimonies presented in the next pages demonstrate the

added value of the method as the way to reach a sustainable urban development.

◆ How to benefit from URBACT

Any city, no matter its size or population, can benefit from URBACT in different ways.

First, the URBACT website is a valuable source of knowledge and experience, with good practices, articles, case studies, Integrated Action Plans on different topics that can inspire small or big city administrations. In parallel, digital and paper publications like this 'Cities in Action - Stories of Change' are accessible throughout Europe with the help of the National URBACT Points.

Second, URBACT regularly organises events open to all EU cities to share knowledge, practices and know-how. These events include URBACT City Festivals, Policy Labs, workshops during the European Week for Regions and Cities and other big conferences. In complement to these events, National URBACT Points operating in 27 EU countries communicate and organise national events on the good practices and results of URBACT cities.

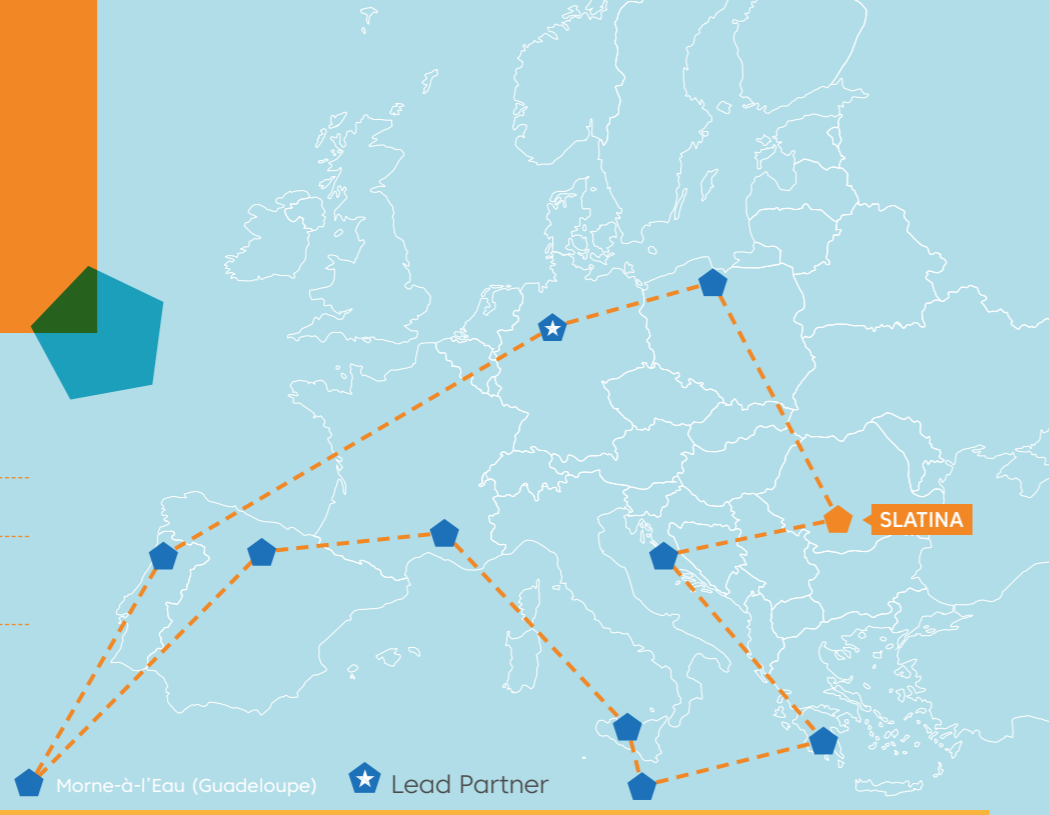
Third, any city can apply to a call for networks and benefit from an exchange and learning journey with EU peers.

The new EU Cohesion Policy and its new instruments for city governments should build on this URBACT method, its results, benefits and lessons learned. Until then, the URBACT programme will continue to make our cities a better place to live.

REDUCING CONGESTION FOR A HEALTHIER, WEALTHIER CITY

Key information

- Location: **Slatina (Romania)**
- Population: **70 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **CityMobilNet**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/citymobilnet>



The municipality of Slatina has been developing a long-term strategy to clear up the city's roads and encourage public transport use. Thanks to participation in URBACT CityMobilNet network, they formed a local group to finalise their Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan and received EU funding to build a fleet of hybrid buses.

Slatina is a city paralysed by traffic. In a 2017 survey, just 8.5% of residents travelled principally by public transport and 0.7% by bicycle, while 48% identified private automobiles as their main mode of travel. Air pollution, noise and a high frequency of accidents are among the most severe consequences. Yet congestion has implications on the local and regional economy too. Companies struggle to move resources through the urban area while consumers are stuck in slow-moving queues. Improving urban mobility has become an urgent priority for reasons of public health, but also to make the city more effective as a commercial and logistic centre.

Through participation in the URBACT CityMobilNet network, the municipality of Slatina took its first steps in building a more sustainable transport model. "Nobody had even thought about these questions," says Cristiana Serban, Public Manager at the Slatina City Hall. "What we were proposing was the city's first ever urban mobility document." The long-term goal was to develop a formal Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan in order to apply for European funding to kick-start longer-term transformation. Slatina's main expectation from URBACT was technical assistance in designing a plan, but also support in pitching the project.

Identifying problems and solutions with a huge local group

After joining URBACT, the city set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) with the specific task of brainstorming towards the Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan. Far larger than expected, it gathered 97 people, from public officials in roads and transport, to security services, educational representatives, NGOs and the media. It also included local and international businesses whose operations would benefit from improved transport.



Evening in Esplanadă, central Slatina



Representatives of Slatina's new e-bike initiative

"We were particularly surprised by the number of citizens who chose to take part," says Ms Serban. "We had several non-specialists that came and participated in every single meeting."

The size and diversity of the group resulted in a broad identification of problems, yet this also brought challenges for rationalising the data. Using URBACT-recommended techniques, like defining problems (causes and consequences), learnt at transnational workshops with the CityMobilNet partner cities, the URBACT Local Group was able to identify shared grievances across different groups of stakeholders. This enabled them to create a full picture of the problems at hand. "We usually don't get the community point of view, just their reaction after enforcing measures," says Claudiu Dascalu, Head of the city's Street, Parking and Lighting Department. "URBACT was different. From my perspective, working with the people in the URBACT Local Group proved that good ideas can come from everywhere and not necessarily from specialists. These were effective meetings that resulted in a comprehensive set of actions."

Educating the public

After months of preparation the municipality gathered the proposed actions together as part of a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, which was completed ahead of schedule in October 2017. Among other things, the document outlined a strategy to improve the road system and open new bike lanes. Its priority, however, was to modernise public transport. Plans were outlined and costed for a fleet of hybrid buses, free wifi at all stops and a new transport management system. The municipality was able to secure regional operational programme funding of EUR 19 774 100 (article 5 of EU regulation on urban mobility) and is now working to implement the ambitious strategy.

"The Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan is in full gear," confirms Birin Adrian-Ciprian, Head of the Urban Planning

Department of Slatina. "We've met with engineers, with road and mobility specialists to shape bike lanes and the public transport system. We are taking all the necessary steps to implement the measures identified by the stakeholders." According to projections from the municipality the implementation of the strategy should see a notable reduction in CO₂ levels, and a healthier, more environmentally friendly city. The minimum ambition is to double public transport use to 16% in the next decade – a modest target but one that would pave the way for further changes in the future.

"URBACT was different. From my perspective, working with the people in the URBACT Local Group proved that good ideas can come from everywhere and not necessarily from specialists. These were effective meetings that resulted in a comprehensive set of actions."

Claudiu Dascalu

Traffic solutions transferred from partner cities

The impact of CityMobilNet did not begin and end with the mobility plan. The immediate need to reduce congestion will be aided by the construction of a central control room, where different traffic models can be integrated. This initiative was based on an example from partners in Aix-Marseille-Provence (FR). Slatina has also set up a project promoting walking to school, based on a successful practice shared by Bielefeld (DE). This is part of a more general effort to shift public attitudes to mobility through educational and cultural intervention. "Working with URBACT was a breath of fresh air," concludes Ms Serban, "we are used to thinking about mobility through national and local bureaucracy, but in this network we were inspired by soft measures to support our work. CityMobilNet really helped us speed things along."

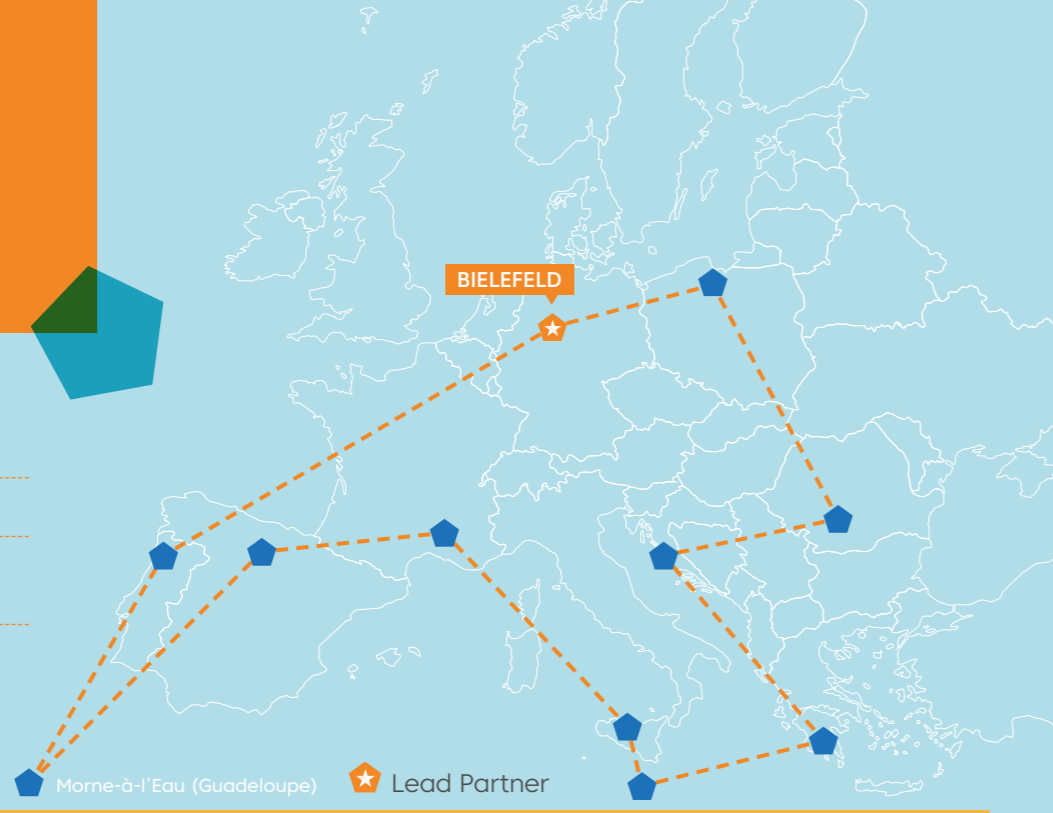


The municipality of Slatina has been working to beautify the city's roads

VISIONING SUSTAINABLE URBAN MOBILITY WITH USERS

Key information

- Location: **Bielefeld (Germany)**
- Population: **340 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **CityMobilNet**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/citymobilnet>



Bielefeld has a strong tradition of environmental politics. With population growth and an intensive commuter culture putting demands on infrastructure, the municipality sought innovative tools from URBACT to design a new sustainable mobility plan.



A panorama of Bielefeld

There's a saying in Germany that Bielefeld doesn't exist. It's an affectionate joke, perpetuated by locals to celebrate their community's provincial reputation. In reality, this medium-sized city, located in North Rhine-Westphalia, is a centre of economy, science and culture for the surrounding region. Administrations from across the political spectrum have demonstrated a particular commitment to environmental principles. Public transport is efficient, and cycling a relatively common mode of transport.

With its high quality of services and planning techniques, the city has seen a population increase of over 10 000 since 2010. In addition, more than 80 000 people commute daily to Bielefeld, many of them by car. Improving transport infrastructure has subsequently emerged as a priority.

"Change in this sector cannot stop at replacing fossil fuels," insists Olaf Lewald, European Affairs and Project Manager at the City of Bielefeld. "We need to critically scrutinise

our previous habits and develop or refine new forms of cooperation, as well as new approaches of planning in order to address the big issues of the future, such as climate change."

Turning to URBACT for new ways to encourage greener travel

In order to formalise this process, the municipality identified the need for a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan, to help change public behaviour in relation to mobility by incentivising green options. In 2015, as the city worked on a draft document, practitioners approached URBACT in search of innovative tools that might be integrated into the plan.

Given their relative experience of sustainable initiatives, Bielefeld became the Lead Partner of the CityMobilNet network. As a result, they had a privileged role in coordinating and defining the modes of collaboration within the network, and were able to share their expertise with cities that were approaching these questions for the first time, like Slatina (RO). Nonetheless, their main priority was to learn from far-off examples. "We joined the network from recognition that there is no uniform solution for all cities," says Mr Lewald. "We wanted to hear from others, meet international experts and exchange knowledge and good practices with other organisations from across Europe."

Southern EU cities inspired new campaigns for walking and cycling

During site visits to southern European cities like Marseille (FR), and Agii Anargyri Kamatero (EL), Bielefeld's newly formed group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) discovered urban mobility problems they hadn't seen before – as well as creative solutions to learn from. In particular, they gained a greater appreciation of the value of 'soft approaches', like posters and cultural interventions, as mechanisms for influencing public behaviour. Inspired by their CityMobilNet partners, they organised a campaign in schools and other public institutions to encourage walking and cycling in the city. Bielefeld were also impressed by Braga's (PT) strategy to expand and improve pedestrian areas. Now the two cities are exchanging strategies on how to make their streets more friendly for the elderly and people with disabilities that limit their movement.

Collective drawing of an Integrated Action Plan on mobility

As well as these opportunities to work with other cities, URBACT introduced Bielefeld to new organisational tools, some of which have proved effective at a local level. The most successful was a meeting format called 'Future Workshop'. This innovative approach to organising strategic gatherings makes use of maps, statistics and results from a cross-section of previous studies as stimuli for building action plans and mission statements. In 2017



The municipality of Bielefeld is encouraging people to find alternatives to private vehicles

"We wanted to hear from others, meet international experts and exchange knowledge and good practices with other organisations from across Europe."

Olaf Lewald

the municipality invited influential stakeholders from in and beyond the urban area to identify priorities together using this method. Participants included representatives from the cyclist and automobile-federations and public transport bodies, but also teachers, doctors and police personnel.

This was not the end of the process, however. Next the municipality drew up a seven-year Integrated Action Plan based on stakeholder feedback. In addition to greening commuters, this document outlines a commitment to make the city centre more attractive, ensure equal participation of all road-users and generally improve safety. Finally, these conclusions were validated in dialogue with high level political representatives. "Using the city parliament's committee for transport they liaised with all of the parties, no matter if they were part of the current government or not," confirms Claus Köllinger, Lead Expert for the network. Ultimately, this process enabled the participatory methods of CityMobilNet to be expressed as a political consensus. In recognition of this, in 2019 the Integrated Action Plan will be formalised into a strategic document, conforming to international Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan standards.

In recognition of their successful coordinating role in CityMobilNet, Bielefeld were selected in 2017 to share their expertise at the Urban Agenda for the EU Partnership for Urban Mobility. This ongoing transnational initiative is exploring how EU funds might assist more effectively in improving urban mobility across all Member States.

TRAILBLAZING URBAN FREIGHT MANAGEMENT

Key information

- Location: **Gdynia (Poland)**
- Population: **247 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **Freight TAILS**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/freight-tails>



A local group helped improve delivery traffic measures in downtown Gdynia, contributing broader proposals to the city’s Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan – the first scheme of its kind in Poland. URBACT connected the municipality with experts and EU cities experienced in urban freight management.



Freight management in the city

Once a quiet Baltic fishing village, Gdynia now hosts Poland’s third-largest port. The nearby city bustles with shops, cafes, restaurants, service companies... and traffic. Facing problems like congestion, accidents, illegal parking and air pollution, the municipality was already developing a Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan through CIVITAS when it joined the URBACT Freight TAILS network. This experience was groundbreaking: for the first time the city focused on urban freight, working with an URBACT Local Group of retailers, residents, police, and other stakeholders.

Because local freight regulations lacked clear definitions, such as delivery bay size, or signage, Gdynia decided to create some practical, easily enforceable, regulations.

By January 2018, the URBACT Local Group’s downtown pilot scheme, with 11 loading bays and a new road system, had been approved by the Mayor’s Political Advisory Committee. Road-painting and regulatory signage installation work began in May, after informing shopkeepers, delivery companies and inhabitants. When the first delivery bays started being used, interest soared.

This was particularly innovative for a 1920s-built Polish city. “Traffic law in Poland focuses mostly on cars...” says Alicja Pawłowska, who manages EU sustainable mobility projects for Gdynia. “The infrastructure therefore is still often being designed and built in a way that supports the use of cars and forces sustainable modes to fight for space.”

Transnational and local cooperation

“Gdynia made very good use of URBACT’s peer review process,” says Freight TAILS Lead Expert Philip Stein. For example, Gdynia invited its international city partners to visit and consider their problems, such as parked cars blocking deliveries, at first hand. Partner advice inspired Gdynia to start with a simple pilot project: planning delivery bays in three main streets. “This attracted politicians’ interest, and helped them understand the benefits of addressing this problem on a city scale,” adds Mr Stein.

Impacts were two-fold, says Daniel Kaszubowski, Gdańsk

University of Technology Professor, and Freight TAILS external expert: “First, decision-makers realised that urban freight is really an important issue for business and community. Secondly, we managed to prove that this issue can be addressed in a practical way, hopefully paving the way for further involvement.”

Gdynia continued learning from its partners throughout Freight TAILS – whether it was employing tips from Umeå (SE) and Brussels (BE) on collecting data and using resources efficiently, or applying advice from London (UK) on encouraging local participation.

This helped the city cooperate with stakeholders like never before, says Ms Pawłowska: “Thanks to URBACT we had the time and resources to go through the participatory process the way it should be done.”

Gdynia’s first detailed freight survey

“29% of city-centre deliveries required double parking, and 25% took place on the pavement.” This is the sort of information Gdynia collected in 2017. Observers recorded 423 deliveries, and the Road and Green Areas Mobility Management Unit staff with students interviewed 334 retailers, meeting many for the first time. “The data we collected was a huge step forward,” says Ms Pawłowska. “The survey gave a basis to assume that a certain type of business generates a certain number of deliveries.”

Gaining momentum

For Prof. Kaszubowski, Freight TAILS highlighted the knock-on effects of improving cities: “We focused on improving reliability of deliveries by providing adequate places to stop and unload. This was one aspect of a problem, but it also provided an opportunity to increase pedestrian safety by removing vans from the pavements.”



New delivery bays mean safer pavements

Encouraged by the pilot scheme, the mayor approved a second, larger and more complex URBACT Local Group proposal: to limit the weight of trucks entering the city centre. Road-sign research and talks with supermarkets are now underway, preparing for launch in February 2019.

Ms Pawłowska adds, “Long-term, there is already an impact as shops from different city areas apply to the city to designate a loading bay close to their location – it’s a growing process.”

“Thanks to URBACT we had the time and resources to go through the participatory process the way it should be done.”

Alicja Pawłowska

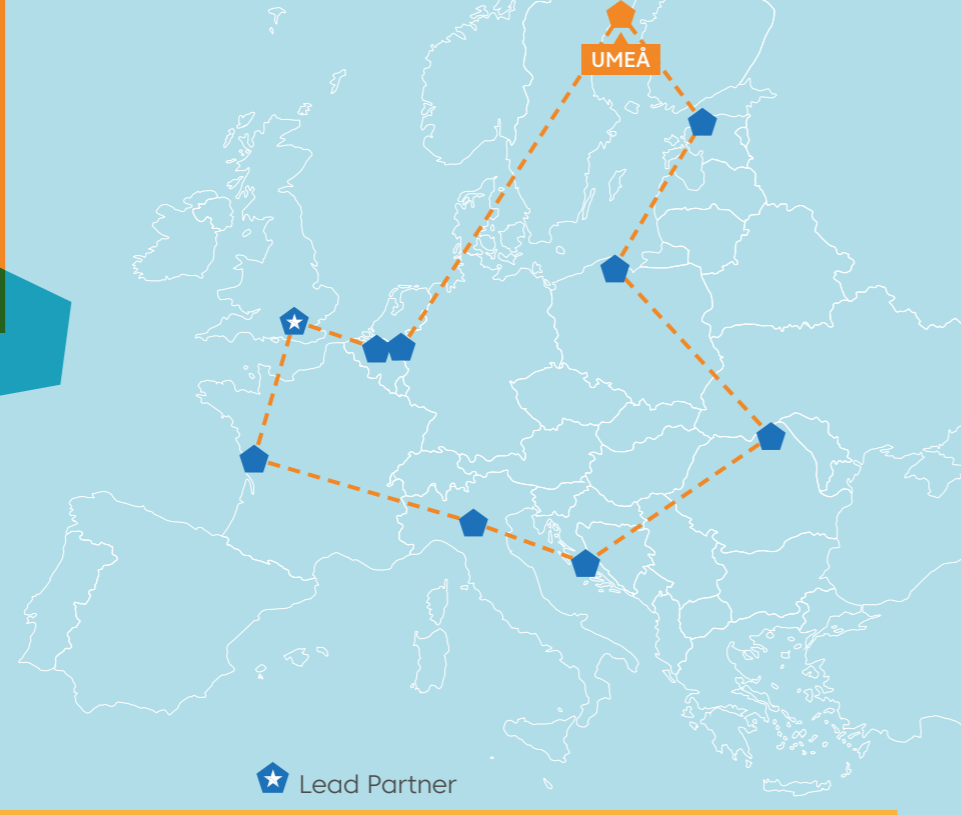
Alicja Pawłowska highlights six URBACT Freight TAILS benefits:

- 1 Engagement of our Deputy Mayor and Deputy Head of City Council and their support in decision-making.
- 2 Surveying deliveries so we could support our measures with real data.
- 3 Getting shopkeepers onboard; holding constructive meetings.
- 4 Having an external expert to analyse data, advise and be very supportive. He was very engaged, flexible, and understood the city’s needs and constraints. He always included our suggestions on how to lead the process. He moderated meetings, and as PhD of a well-known University of Technology, helped attract support for our proposed measures.
- 5 Mayor’s request to analyse (and implement) the URBACT Local Group’s proposal for a weight restriction system, on top of a decision to implement our delivery bay plans.
- 6 Giving out leaflets in shops on how the new delivery bays function. Shop owners and managers were generally very positive: they saw this measure as something to help them function. We’d been worried people would say parking space was taken from them. But in the end we felt a great satisfaction with our work in the project.

A NEW URBAN FREIGHT PLAN

Key information

- Location: **Umeå (Sweden)**
- Population: **123 380**
- Involved in URBACT network: **Freight TAILS**
- More information: <http://www.urbact.eu/freight-tails>



When Umeå — northern Sweden’s largest urban community — joined the URBACT Freight TAILS network, its city centre faced increasing traffic problems, partly from vehicles delivering to shops and services. With a fast-growing population and e-commerce boom, Umeå needed to build a sustainable freight transport strategy to stay attractive.

“Umeå has problems with air quality in the city centre: That was the starting point for our work with freight, and the entrance to URBACT,” recalls Lina Samuelsson, Project Manager at the Umeå Municipality.

Working with nine Freight TAILS partner cities for over two years, the municipality built a clear, integrated plan: ‘Freight programme for Umeå city centre 2018-2025’ which was granted full approval by the City Council.

“Today we have a programme which makes it easier to take the right decisions when it comes to freight in Umeå. And that’s for all of Umeå, all our inhabitants, people who come here to visit, people who are, or will be, working with freight...” says Ms Samuelsson.

Demystifying local interests

Carriers, residents, government, suppliers, businesses, landlords, vehicle manufacturers... such complex interests had hindered planning for the future of freight in Umeå. No one owned the whole problem, making it tricky to understand, communicate and agree solutions.

After joining URBACT, the city set up a local group (URBACT Local Group) bringing relevant people together to identify

“We haven’t worked with an URBACT Local Group like this before. We have some similar approaches, but the URBACT method refined this and made it more successful.”

Lisa Persson

“Our URBACT Local Group was a very important support giving us input and data when we developed the status report,” says Ms Samuelsson. “In future, they’ll be one of the most important partners for Umeå municipality to succeed in achieving the goals of the Freight Traffic Programme.”

“Umeå had expertise in thinking about the relationship between freight delivery and retail,” explains URBACT Lead Expert Philip Stein, “but no real knowledge on how to deal with it in the city context — they were unable to connect with the sectors, e.g. freight operators. In the end they were one of the most successful in getting the politicians on board.”

main freight challenges, including: dangerous on-street loading and unloading; air and noise pollution; unregulated delivery traffic; and complex waste collection. The municipality produced a status report, forming a basis for the new freight programme, in line with the city’s development strategies.

“Our URBACT Local Group was a very important support

Integrated freight plan launched

Umeå’s new Freight Programme has begun. Lisa Persson’s Traffic Planner, Streets and Parks department is preparing a ‘freight checklist’ for planning decisions, and a brochure for carriers. Soon, the city-centre loading bays will be monitored to help decide future locations.

Future actions include procurement requirements promoting quiet, energy-efficient municipality transport, and improvements for restricted zone deliveries, including physical design and pathways.

Reflecting the stakeholders’ diversity, this work involves municipal departments, from planning and procurement to environment and health protection — but also shop owners, carriers, the municipality’s waste and water company, and more.

The freight plan includes four realistic ‘indicators’, measuring: local opinions; delivery vehicles in selected streets; deaths and serious injuries by freight vehicles; and the proportion of heavy vehicles respecting environmental zone regulations.

Though the URBACT network is finished, Umeå’s appetite for cross-sector, participatory projects looks set to last.

Inter-city learning

URBACT tools included an ‘evil projections’ exercise, to identify potential pitfalls — and avoid them with help from transnational peers. Umeå’s were: “little interest in URBACT



Umeå: pedestrians, cyclists... and deliveries



Lisa Persson and Lina Samuelsson co-produced Umeå’s freight programme

Local Group participation”; and “difficulty getting political leadership to understand the importance of working strategically with freight”. So they involved politicians from the start. The scheme received widespread support; and two city councillors attended the network’s final conference in Split (HR).

“Our politicians are debating freight in the City Council — I can’t remember the last time they did that. It’s great!” says Ms Samuelsson.

Of all the useful exchanges with Freight TAILS cities, Ms Samuelsson highlights Maastricht (NL): “We received much input from them regarding their work with behavioural change... we’ll use some of their ideas in future campaigns.”

“What the municipality’s work-model was missing, the URBACT method had. It was like completing the missing pieces in the puzzle,” says Ms Persson. “We haven’t worked with an URBACT Local Group like this before. We have some similar approaches, but the URBACT method refined this and made it more successful.”

Lina Samuelsson shares her Freight TAILS highlights

FEB. 2016

Brussels: 1st Transnational Meeting. We decided the network’s six themes.

SEP. 2016

Creation of our URBACT Local Group. A group where everyone wants to be part of the change. A group that loves to discuss and listen to each other. A group that helps me / us see places with problems and challenges but also finds good solutions.

JAN. 2017

Parma (IT): 3rd Transnational Meeting. I felt “now we are a group that trusts each other and really can help and support each other”.

APR. 2017

Gdynia (PL): Ian Wainwright joined as network Expert. His knowledge helped us take a bigger step in understanding freight and the effect it has on the city.

MAY 2017

Maastricht (NL): It became clear how much all our partner cities do at home, but also how we as a group create good results together.

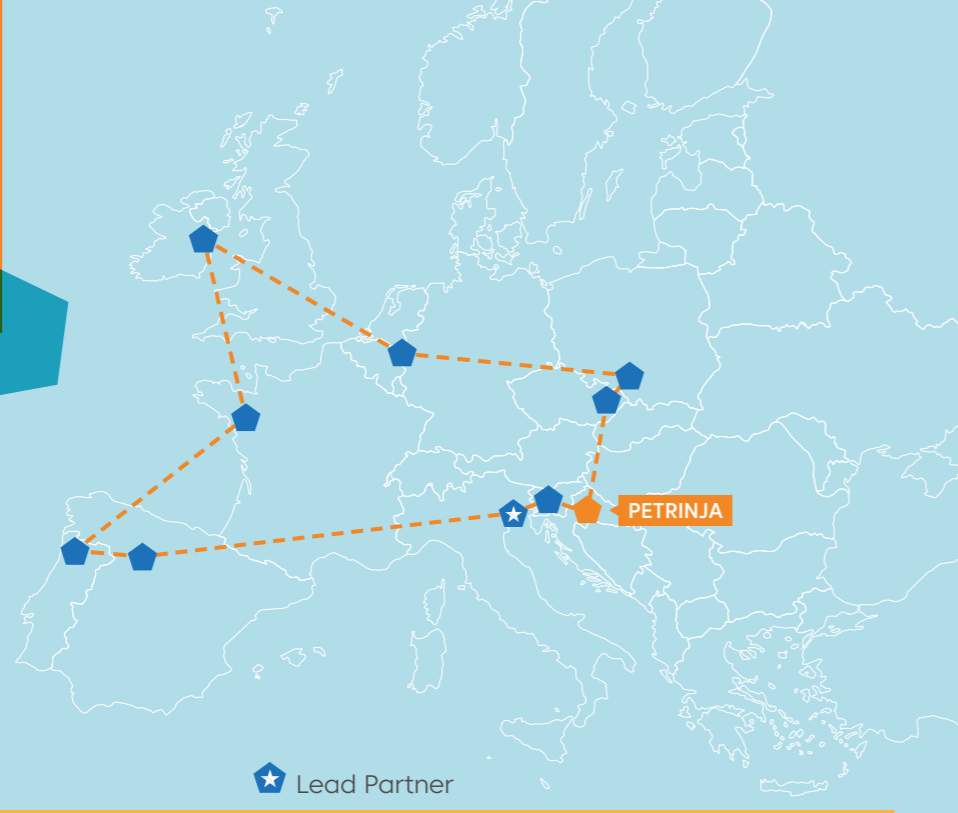
JUNE 2018

The City Council adopted our freight traffic programme for Umeå centre, thus deciding a freight programme should be developed for the entire municipality.

IDEAS CAFÉS AND OPEN-AIR CLASSES: RECLAIMING PUBLIC SPACE

Key information

- 📍 Location: **Petrinja (Croatia)**
- 👤 Population: **15 480**
- 🏠 Involved in URBACT network: **CityCentreDoctor**
- 🌐 More information: <http://urbact.eu/citycentredoctor>



A war-damaged city needed a renewed sense of civic life. With the help of URBACT, inclusive community events are reactivating public spaces and improving quality of life.

📍 Petrinja's struggle as a postwar city

Located in central Croatia, 60 km from the capital Zagreb, Petrinja has a long and complex history. A centre for the craft trade in the 18th century, it then became the nucleus of the meat trade after the country's leading salami factory, Gavrilović, headquartered there. In the Croatian war of 1991-1995, however, the town's social, economic and physical fabric suffered severely – and recovery has been slow. The city looked to the URBACT CityCentreDoctor network as a way to help improve the quality of life, and built environment, in Petrinja.

In 2016, thanks to their participation in URBACT, Petrinja set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) and carried out a place analysis and resident survey. They found that many citizens felt their city centre had underused public space, unused state-owned buildings, poor incentives for entrepreneurs, high traffic, a lack of facilities for children and young people, and lack of social events in public places.

📍 Restoring community spirit thanks to Urban Parktivity

The local group then decided to focus on supporting community activities as a way to mobilise interest in, and support for, an improved city centre. To this end, they planned a beta action – a low-cost prototype set up by each city partner involved in the CityCentreDoctor network to test potential future actions – to take place on the Strossmeyer

promenade. This central, park-like square was seen by citizens as the 'heart of the city', but it was in great need of revitalisation.

In March 2017, inspired by a similar successful technique in the partner city of Nort-sur-Erdre (FR), the group organised an ideas cafe to engage the community in looking for new ways to activate public space. Themes such as yoga, karate, eco-lifestyle and local produce emerged as priorities.

The group's intention was to encourage people to spend more time in Petrinja's open public spaces and associate them with healthy, inclusive, family-oriented activities. So, Urban Parktivity was organised on Strossmeyer in May 2017. For this buzzing morning of activities, the municipality made kiosks and stalls available for school and community groups to use. There were free yoga and dancing classes, and children from the local karate club demonstrated their skills. There were also dedicated stalls to engage the public and encourage them to sign a petition to improve the city centre. Members of the local group heard from many residents who were enthusiastic about improving Petrinja's buildings and public spaces. "We were overwhelmed by the response from people," says Vlasta Vuglec, Head of Town Planning for the municipality of Petrinja.

Urban Parktivity created new uses for the Strossmeyer promenade. "Because of the success of Urban Parktivity, residents of Petrinja see the URBACT programme as a way



Karate demonstration, Urban Parktivity, May 2017



Karate demonstration, Urban Parktivity, May 2017

to develop a better and healthier life in Petrinja," says Marko Stojanović, Communication Officer for the municipality of Petrinja. Inspired by the example of Urban Parktivity, the promenade is now a regular venue for concerts, exhibitions, and workshops, as well as public events marking occasions such as Europe Day, International Children's Day, and World Health Day.

📍 Exchanging with European cities: a success factor

Marko Zlonoga, an architect appointed by the municipality to work with the CityCentreDoctor network and support the local group, reflects on the experience: "I met lots of new and interesting people, enjoyed the international exchange and all the positive energy and ideas that came through this participatory process. These two years as part

of the CityCentreDoctor network brought a great deal of knowledge, experience, positive energy and hope to people in the City of Petrinja administration, members of the URBACT Local Group and other people involved."

"The opportunity to exchange knowledge, see work, and get in dialogue over similar problems with nine other cities across Europe meant a great deal for them and boosted their faith, reassuring them that they can succeed in implementing and finalising all those important projects for the City of Petrinja," adds Mr Zlonoga.

Marko Stojanović agrees: "Thanks to the CityCentreDoctor network, we got many interesting ideas and suggestions from other cities on how to create an attractive identity for Petrinja with a goal of revitalising life in the city centre."



Dancing at the Urban Parktivity, May 2017

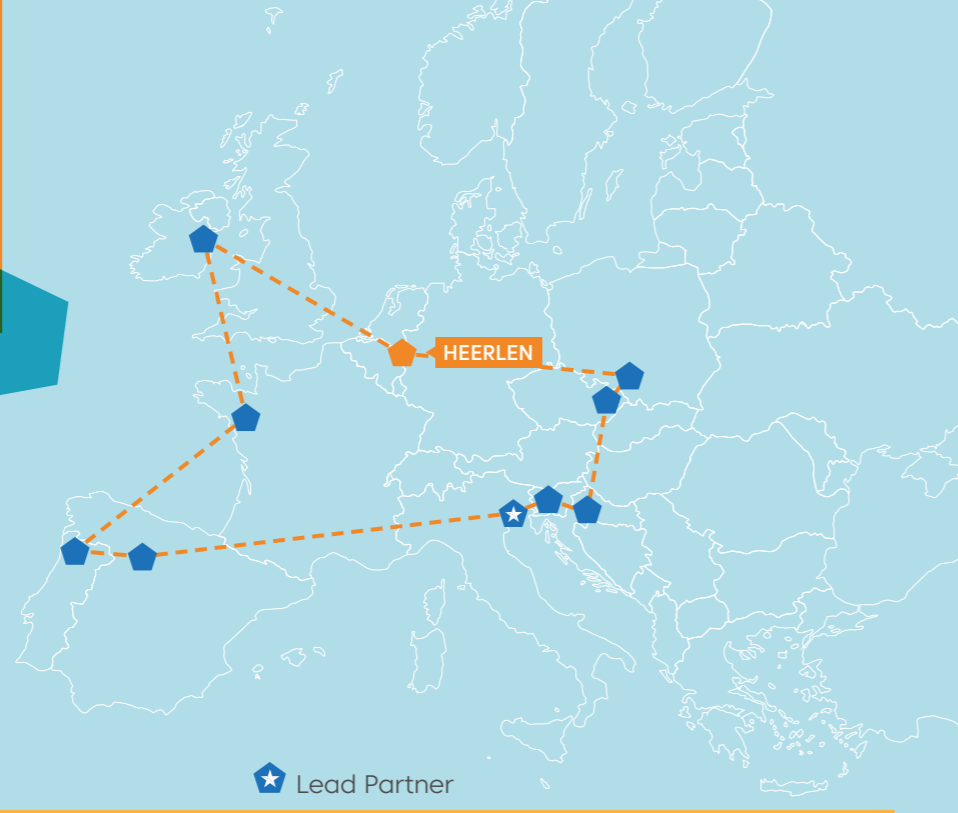
"Residents of Petrinja see the URBACT programme as a way to develop a better and healthier life in Petrinja."

Marko Stojanović

HOW RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES ARE RE-ENERGISING THEIR CITY CENTRE

Key information

- Location: **Heerlen (Netherlands)**
- Population: **86 833**
- Involved in URBACT network: **CityCentreDoctor**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/citycentredoctor>



Many in this southern Dutch city wanted change, but didn't know how to effect it. Following a wealth of inspiration, participation and activation through URBACT, things are now looking up.



The Heerlen URBACT Local Group

◆ The challenge: revitalising Heerlen's city centre

Located in the far south-east of the Netherlands, close to the cities of Aachen and Maastricht, Heerlen was once a thriving centre for the coal mining industry – but suffered economically after the mines closed. The last few decades, however, have seen cultural sector investment and a growing service industry. Heerlen has been proactive in promoting urban revitalisation: in 2013, it set up Heerlen Mijn Stad (Heerlen My City), bringing various stakeholders together to work on improving the city's attractiveness.

Heerlen's goal in joining the URBACT CityCentreDoctor Network was to transform ambition into action, and stimulate greater civic participation. In 2016, drawing members from Heerlen Mijn Stad, the city set up an URBACT Local Group and conducted a thorough place analysis and resident survey. They identified the city's main challenges and aspirations: citizens felt there was no coherent, compact city centre of activity; vacant units were disliked; improved public realm and green meeting places were desired.

The municipality together with local stakeholders developed 26 ambitions for change, including: transforming vacant real estate for creative industries; redesigning city squares; enhancing greenery; restoring building facades; supporting street art; enabling year-round public events; and investing in a 'city lab'. The URBACT Local Group was involved in executing the 26 ambitions.

◆ Testing change with the Hotel Park Urbana

With CityCentreDoctor's support, Heerlen set up short-term prototypes, or beta actions, to test out potential features of its Integrated Action Plan. The most prominent was Hotel Park Urbana in summer 2017. The local group drew public space inspiration from CityCentreDoctor cities including Medina del Campo (ES), Nort-sur-Erdre (FR) and San Donà di Piave (IT), using Nort-sur-Erdre's ideas market tool for project idea generation.



Hotel Park Urbana

Hotel Park Urbana was a free, open-air, pop-up hotel and park created in the city centre, on 'de Vijf Pleintjes' (the Five Squares). Coordinated by the URBACT Local Group, working with neighbouring businesses, the project drew crowds of people to enjoy extensive greenery, a restaurant, piano bar, nightclub, special tents to stay in, and a wellness spa. Feedback was so positive that an official foundation was formed to organise future activation of public spaces. Residents and businesses gave an 'ambition document' to the Alderman (Mayor), asking for more permanent greenery in de Vijf Pleintjes. The Alderman promised that improvements would be addressed and the design phase has now started.

Evaluations show that Heerlen's city centre has become greener since joining the CityCentreDoctor network – and more people are using public spaces. "This year we focus on possibilities for urban sports in the public space together with the young sporters" says Richard van Beek, Project Manager Urban Experience for Heerlen. Stakeholder engagement and participation has increased,

as well as urban pride. Heerlen has presented its experiences at various conferences, and was labelled as an URBACT Good Practice for supporting street art. The challenge now is to maintain community momentum and political will, and secure funds. In addition to regular meetings, the local group plans to have annual inspirational trips to other cities.

"The feedback that the visiting cities gave us was a great help in focus and creativity."

Douwe Dijkstra

◆ Learning from transnational city walks

Visits to cities of the network were vital in informing ideas. "On every visit, we did city walks and looked at the nice things of the partner cities, but also confronted the challenges," says Yvette Petit, City Centre Liaison for Heerlen Municipality, and URBACT Local Group Coordinator. "Together we were able to find guides for solutions."

Heerlen learned from network partners like Amarante (PT) that greening public space can make cities both more lively and more climate-resilient. Medina del Campo (ES) gave Heerlen new ideas for hosting creative entrepreneurs in vacant buildings; as a result, 5 000 m² of vacant real estate in Heerlen had been transformed for creative industries by the end of 2017.

Partner cities' visits to Heerlen also brought new insights. "The feedback that the visiting cities gave us was a great help in focus and creativity," explains Douwe Dijkstra local group member, and Heerlen Mijn Stad Business Group Leader.



Street art in Heerlen

A SOCIAL ECONOMY, DESIGNED BY MILLENNIALS

Key information

- 📍 Location: **Toruń (Poland)**

- 👤 Population: **200 000**

- 🏠 Involved in URBACT network:
GEN-Y City

- 📄 More information:
<http://urbact.eu/gen-y-city>

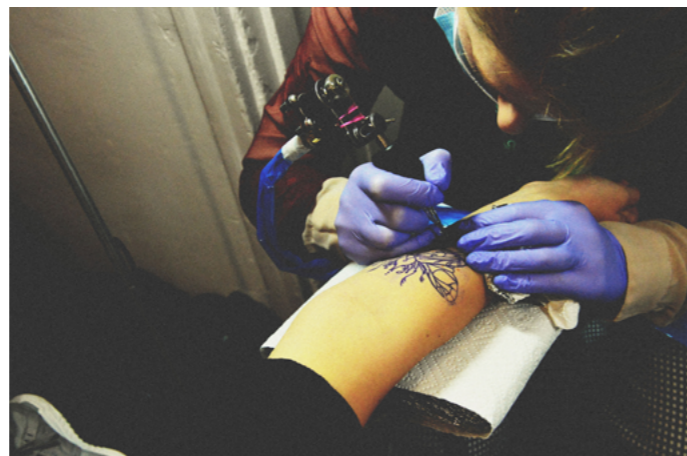


Toruń is struggling with an aging population and declining city centre. Thanks to the URBACT GEN-Y City network, a social movement was born that is building a new cultural infrastructure for young professionals.

Toruń is a historic city, famous for its UNESCO World Heritage listed old town and the prestigious Nicolaus Copernicus University, which hosts an annual population of around 30 000 students. Like most of the city's youth, the majority tend to move away after graduating. Their main motivations are economic. Salaries in Toruń are relatively low in comparison to bigger cities and there are few large-scale or renowned employers. In addition, there are not enough future-oriented spaces in the city centre, where naturally young people gather and when there are young, creative entrepreneurs work alone and don't cooperate or exchange ideas amongst them.

🏠 Livening up the medieval centre

As part of the GEN-Y City network, Toruń's Municipality reached out directly to millennials to develop a solution. The city set up an URBACT Local Group made up of young business people, alongside representatives from NGOs and the university. Several of the participants were below 30. All agreed on the urgent need to reanimate the city's old town, which they saw as expensive and lacking in energy. Using URBACT methods, the group proposed various small-scale initiatives, including volunteer walking tours and regular street food festivals, to bring some new life to the area. They also identified an urgent need for co-working spaces and other physical incubators, to encourage cooperation across sectors.



The URBACT Local Group supported designers and tattoo artists to spread their message

In order to extend the reach of the group's discussions, the municipality produced a document in collaboration with the university called the 'Lexicon of a Contemporary City'. This was a guide for people unfamiliar with new urban concepts like sustainable architecture or ride-sharing schemes. It was distributed at book festivals, local libraries and other meetings as a way of educating the public about innovations in other EU cities that might usefully be imported to Toruń.

A major turning point came in 2016 at the URBACT Summer University in Rotterdam (NL) when representatives from the local group discovered other models of collaborative



Music has been an important part of unlocking the city's youth culture

Toruń were particularly struck by Gdańsk's (PL) example of neighbourhood houses – community centres funded by the municipality but run by citizens. "We saw how open and balanced the network was," recalls Ewelina Rejs, a project manager at the municipality, and URBACT Local Group Coordinator. "We met a lot of inspiring people and the manual was great too. I've used it since to design other projects." Małgorzata Ptaszek, a municipal officer, was similarly animated by the wealth of practical tools they encountered, like problem trees and techniques for mapping stakeholder interests: "It was like a trampoline for our team. Thanks to new methods like these we were able to dig out ideas that we had in our minds."

After the Summer University, the URBACT Local Group developed a more dynamic vision of the project. If at first they had been concerned with physical locations and existing institutions, they subsequently came to see GEN-Y City as an entirely new movement. The local group put an increasing emphasis on interventions, events and activities. They built a viral campaign around vintage clothing and vinyl records, tattoos and video games. The project was transformed into a kind of meme, manifesting itself in a number of forms – from street art and poetry initiatives to night markets and community activism. The success of



A pop-up market, organised by PERS

this approach was acknowledged formally in June 2017 when Krzysztof Wachowiak, manager of a nightclub called NRD, was given an award by the city's mayor in celebration of a series of educational meetings he had organised between young people and musicians.

"Thanks to new methods, we were able to dig out ideas that we had in our minds."

Małgorzata Ptaszek

🏠 An institutional legacy

As the GEN-Y City project came to an end, some of the city's urban practitioners returned to the idea of a specific building from which they could continue the collaborations developed during the local group's activities. Seven of the most active members created The Studio M6 Foundation, a formal offshoot of that previous group. Thanks to regional funding, the foundation was able to renovate an apartment in an old tenement building within the medieval town. Inside they opened a social cafe called PERS, which has become an archetype of the kind of incubator identified as so urgently lacking by the original URBACT Local Group.

"It reflects the ideas behind GEN-Y City 100%," explains Małgorzata Janas-Ławniczuk, Chair of the Board of the Studio M6 Foundation. "We are a social economy business. We give work to young people and students, but also to people with disabilities and others that can't find jobs." Aside from co-working, PERS hosts cultural events, art exhibitions and pop-up markets. "We promote everything that makes our town special and different," says Ms Janas-Ławniczuk, "we support local business people, promote local cuisine and art and have monthly lectures on local history." PERS is not just a cool venue, but an institution, and, as the physical hub for a broader network, a blueprint that might be exported to other cities.

FROM OIL ECONOMY TO DIGITAL HUB

Key information

- Location: **Kristiansand (Norway)**
- Population: **92 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **GEN-Y City**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/gen-y-city>



Often disregarded as a sleepy retirement town, Kristiansand is reinventing itself as a centre for tech innovation. As part of the URBACT GEN-Y City Network, the municipality worked with student organisations to promote digital skills for citizens of all ages.

Kristiansand is at a crossroads. Situated next to abundant oil and gas reserves, these industries have traditionally provided great wealth to the surrounding area. Now, as the need for cleaner energy models becomes ever more apparent, the city is looking for alternative economic drivers. Demographic change is a big part of the story. Due to the perceived abundance of pensioners who live in the city to enjoy its relatively warm climate, Kristiansand is sometimes nicknamed the Florida of Norway. Like many stereotypes, though, this is deceptive. According to a 2016 census, just 13% of the city's population were over 67 years old, while 23% were under 18. Seen as a whole, the city is actually getting younger.

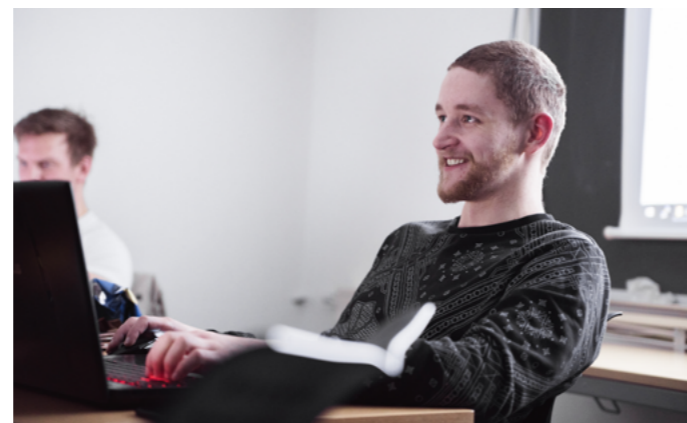
These phenomena represent a dual challenge for Kristiansand's future. The city needs to develop its image and its economic model together – and for this to work, it is vital to harness young people's energies. "When we decided to participate in GEN-Y City we had very specific goals," explains Tina Norheim Abrahamsen, adviser to the municipality. "We focused on connecting directly with young people, to attract and retain talent through engagements with digital technology."

Kristiansand has a headstart in developing this sector. A major asset is the University of Agder, which has a campus

on the outskirts of the city, and a strong reputation for Information Technologies. In addition, a number of tech companies are already thriving and, with the right support from local government, could be connected more effectively with a new generation of entrepreneurs. GEN-Y City was an opportunity for a targeted intervention, to streamline the city's talent pipeline more effectively.

Supporting start-ups

Involved in URBACT, the city set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to produce an integrated plan for this reason. The URBACT Local Group served as an ideal meeting point for engaged young people



The hackathon was enjoyed by tech enthusiasts across the city



The view over Kristiansand's port

to interact with leading stakeholders in the city, this was a new experience for all sides. "I was surprised when we first started collaborating with the municipality," says Robin Amir Rondestvedt Moudnib, leader of Systematicus, a student run an Information Technologies organisation, "I guess I had some prejudice about it being a slow and archaic organisation." He and his colleagues were quickly proved wrong. As part of this group they soon came into contact with a lot of people relevant to their professional development, including staff from Egde Consulting, a local tech company, and CoWorx, a collaborative working space. A new start-up called Nexus, the first e-sports restaurant in Kristiansand, was born as a direct result of these interactions.



The local group facilitated collaboration between students and local companies

One of the group's most innovative collaborations came with the organisation and evolution of the city's hackathon. The first edition took place in 2017, led by the municipality as a way of bringing programmers, software developers and designers of all ages together to showcase the importance, and fun, of learning about tech. The following year, Systematicus were among the organisers. "The municipality helped with prize money, open data and the venue, but the whole process felt like we were the focus,"

reflects Mr Moudnib, "we got the possibility of having an open problem for the attendants to solve, as opposed to solving a case for an organisation that sponsored the event." For Ms Abrahamsen this passing of responsibility was a major vindication of the URBACT project: "This was the biggest success for me, watching the students take control for themselves."

Teaching the kids to code

While GEN-Y City was primarily focused on millennials, one of its biggest successes was targeted at an even younger demographic. Just as the project was getting started, one of the city's most important volunteer programmes, a local coding club for children, was forced to close down due to lack of capacity. The URBACT Local Group came together to diagnose why and develop a sustainable solution. Systematicus joined forces with another student organisation, OpenSource UiA, to provide volunteer teachers. They were assisted by Aftenskolen Agder, a night school, which helped organise the lessons, while Egde Consulting provided technical support. The municipality provided a venue, at the local library.

By autumn 2017 the coding club was back in action, educating more children than ever and at the same time revitalising one of the city's neglected civic spaces. In recognition of this success, the municipality agreed to provide funding to cover some costs for the volunteer staff in October 2018. Mr Moudnib will continue to play a leading role. "The fact that we got the coding club back up and running is such a big win. I can't emphasise that enough."

"I think there will be a long-term legacy for the GEN-Y City project, a network of individuals that works every day to raise tech competence among people of all ages, and create value for the region."

Robin Amir Rondestvedt Moudnib

SMART SPECIALISATION IN A POST-INDUSTRIAL CITY

Key information

- Location: **Bilbao (Spain)**
- Population: **345 120**
- Involved in URBACT network: **In Focus**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/In-Focus>



Since Bilbao's deindustrialisation and the building of the Guggenheim in the 1990s, this northern Spanish city has been a world leader in urban regeneration. By joining the URBACT In Focus network, Bilbao's dynamic civic leaders brought together a group of local stakeholders to energise the most advanced sectors of the city's economy.

The mining and the ironworks may have closed over 30 years ago, and an art museum – the Guggenheim – may now be its most famous building, but Bilbao is still a city linked to industry. Today, the manufacturing firms are very different from the heavy industry of the past: highly competitive and knowledge-intensive, many of them operate on world markets. New products and new business models developed elsewhere can revolutionise the industry, profiting those who adapt fast. Nowadays, Bilbao, as a city of services that look to the industry, is committed to continue promoting and opening itself to innovation and

knowledge in order to continue growing and favouring its international competitiveness.

But to be competitive, Bilbao wanted to take the lead in its own urban economic development. The city's objective is to foster smart growth that combines urban, environmental, technological, social and economic aspects in order to continue to generate economic activity with quality employment and well-being for the citizens.

This is one of the reasons why Bilbao set up the In Focus network. A network of 10 cities which were willing to

enhance their competitiveness and job creation capability by positioning themselves in the new economic landscape according to their areas of specialisation, duly articulated with the regional smart specialisation strategy (see box) from a multilevel governance perspective. The key challenge was to facilitate the economic transformation and specialisation in the city, reflecting on how sectorial policies can be improved and better connected, from an integrated urban development perspective.

From identifying priority economic sectors...

The smart specialisation approach in Bilbao helped to clearly identify local competitive assets: the Advanced Business Services (Knowledge Intensive Business Services - KIBS), the Cultural and Creative Industries (CCI) and the Digital Economy. All these three sectors are in close connection to the strategic priorities defined on regional level by the Basque Country.

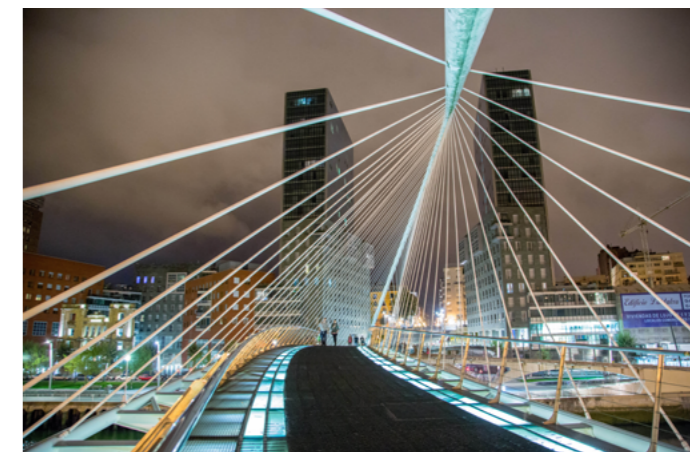
For almost three years, the city has worked together with local stakeholders in mapping the economic activity and identifying lines of action and flagship projects that can contribute to strengthening the specialisation of the city in these three sectors.

Within the In Focus network, the city set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) from the Bilbao City Council (Bilbao Ekintza), the Provincial Council of Bizkaia, the Basque Government in charge of the regional smart specialisation, to research centres, universities, and the Chamber of Commerce. Vivaly, the group also included two Bilbao-based regional cluster organisations: the EIKEN, an association of companies based in the Basque Country dedicated to the creation and distribution of content related to the industries of the creative economy; and the IT cluster GAIA, which is the Association of Electronic and Information Technologies. The latter is a private and professional non-profit organisation made up of 260 companies offering products and services in electronics and information technology such as Iberdrola, the leading Spanish multinational electric utility company.

Putting all these stakeholders around the table was a matter of great importance for Nora Sarasola, General Director of Bilbao Ekintza. The URBACT Local Group has allowed a group of actors, both public and private, to share ideas and potential opportunities and put them at the service of the strategic planning of the city of Bilbao to deepen the specialisation in the priority sectors.

... to producing an integrated plan

Together these stakeholders have co-designed a long-term operational work plan, the Integrated Action Plan. In this plan, Bilbao Ekintza becomes a facilitator of the specialisation process. This means facilitating the identification of new



Bilbao's Zubizuri bridge

emerging sectorial opportunities, but it also embraces cross-cutting features such as the development of a competitive intelligence to identify economic opportunities through a process of obtaining and transforming information, as well as talent development and entrepreneurship, providing spaces for the specialisation, or branding the city as a pole of specialisation, among others.

This co-designing process has helped better target projects with high potential. Eight flagship projects have been specifically identified to promote the specialisation in the priority sectors, such as the AS-Fabrik and the Bilbao Alliance for Smart Specialisation in Advanced Services towards the Digital Transformation of the industry.

The AS-Fabrik's main purpose is to increase the competitiveness of the Knowledge Intensive Business Services (KIBS) sector of Bilbao through a capacity building collaborative process. The objective is to prepare this sector to answer to the challenges of the digital transformation to industry 4.0, which the manufacturing sector will face in a very near future. AS-Fabrik is now being supported with funds from the Urban Innovative Actions Initiative.

"The way of working internally in Bilbao Ekintza has changed thanks to the participation in the project."

Nora Sarasola

Bilbao's real triumph was in organising the complexity of so many different participants and creating a shared map, vocabulary and objectives for the economic development of the three priority sectors. Ms Sarasola believes that the local and transnational exchange and learning activities encouraged by URBACT have strengthened the local team's skills to design and implement solutions in the field of urban economic development. Similarly, they have seen a positive impact on the facilitation and involvement of other agents in the co-design and implementation of urban policies. "The way of working internally in Bilbao Ekintza has changed thanks to the participation in the project", she says.

What is a smart specialisation strategy?

According to the Regulation (EU) 1301/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 17 December 2013 a 'smart specialisation strategy' means:

The national or regional innovation strategies which set priorities in order to build competitive advantage by developing and matching research and innovation own strengths to business needs in order to address emerging opportunities and market developments in a coherent manner,

while avoiding duplication and fragmentation of efforts.

A smart specialisation strategy may take the form of, or be included in a national or regional research and innovation (R&I) strategic policy framework.

Smart specialisation strategies shall be developed through involving national or regional managing authorities and stakeholders such as universities and other higher education institutions, industry and social partners in an entrepreneurial discovery process.

STRENGTHENING ECONOMIC ECOSYSTEMS ACROSS A METROPOLIS

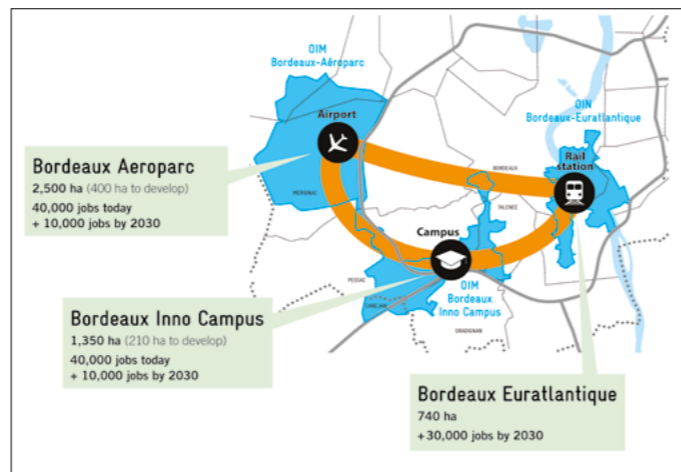
Key information

- Location: **Bordeaux (France)**
- Population: **774 930**
- Involved in URBACT network: **In Focus**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/In-Focus>



Against a backdrop of massive expansion in population, the URBACT In Focus network gave Bordeaux a new opportunity to set up a metropolitan-scale “Smart Specialisation Strategy” to boost its local economic development.

The timing for Bordeaux could not have been better. On 1 January 2015, it became one of France’s eleven newly defined metropolises, and by national law automatically exercised increased powers in several key areas, chief of which is economic development. Right at the beginning of In Focus, Alain Juppé, who was once Jacques Chirac’s Prime Minister and had been mayor of the city since 1995, knew a good offer when he saw one: “When Bilbao offered us in 2016 to join a European project focused on improving our strategies to support the economic ecosystems of our territories, Bordeaux Métropole seized this opportunity to enrich and support the implementation of its economic roadmap.”



The three major development sites in Bordeaux Métropole

Making innovation manifest

In the scope of the In Focus network, Bordeaux sought to strengthen the “Economic Metropolis” as a driver of employment with the ambition to create 100 000 new jobs by 2030. To do so, Bordeaux Métropole gathered different stakeholders, from the region, the university, the Chamber of Commerce, and cluster organisations in an URBACT Local Group to seek synergies between these different stakeholders who are involved in innovation strategies.

Focusing on three development sites of metropolitan or national interest like **Bordeaux Euratlantique**, one of the largest urban regeneration project (740 hectares), now in France around Bordeaux’s central rail station: 2 500 000 m²

of housing, offices and public facilities, to welcome ultimately 40,000 new inhabitants and 30,000 new jobs; **Bordeaux Aéroparc** (next to the international airport) in which 400 hectares have been designated to underpin the growth of the aerospace-defence cluster; and **Bordeaux Inno’Campus**, based in and around the university campus and hospitals focusing on the health sciences and high technology sectors. The URBACT Local Group came up with an Integrated Action Plan structured around 4 themes and several actions:

1) Support innovation

Within the Bordeaux Aéroparc site, the URBACT Local Group has proposed the creation of a 7 500 m² flagship space

that will bring together innovation actors like start-ups, businesses, the university and students, to reinforce the aerospace-defence cluster of Bordeaux Métropole. Other actions include regular workshops bringing together the main actors of the three development sites to exchange on their needs and identify solutions that can serve different clusters.

2) Develop innovation projects and experiments

Looking at the specific needs of the development sites and of their users, the URBACT Local Group proposed pilot actions related to mobility, more specifically to facilitate the access of the sites to different groups, like seniors and patients.

3) Initiate innovative ways of doing things

As a result of URBACT, the local group aimed to bring innovation in public procurement and in the way public works are conducted. This is why public authorities now work on ‘innovation partnerships’: a new mechanism in EU law which allows contracting authorities to team up with either single or multiple partners to research and develop an innovative outcome, rather than simply hand contracts to a bidding company.

4) Encourage innovation from new talents

With the objective to upscale innovative projects and connect them with enterprises, the local group proposed a student contest in the university called ‘Hacketafac’, or ‘improve your faculty’. In 2017, the University of Bordeaux awarded prizes to nine projects selected for their quality and their relevance to the transformation of the University. Each received an endowment of EUR 10 000 to further develop the project. One of the winners, Albalet Frontage, proposed an interactive and programmable series of lights for building facades. The project has now been built and is raising public awareness of the growing impact of code in our environment. A second edition of ‘Hacketafac’ was completed in 2018 with another seven prizes going to worthy winners.

A long-lasting impact

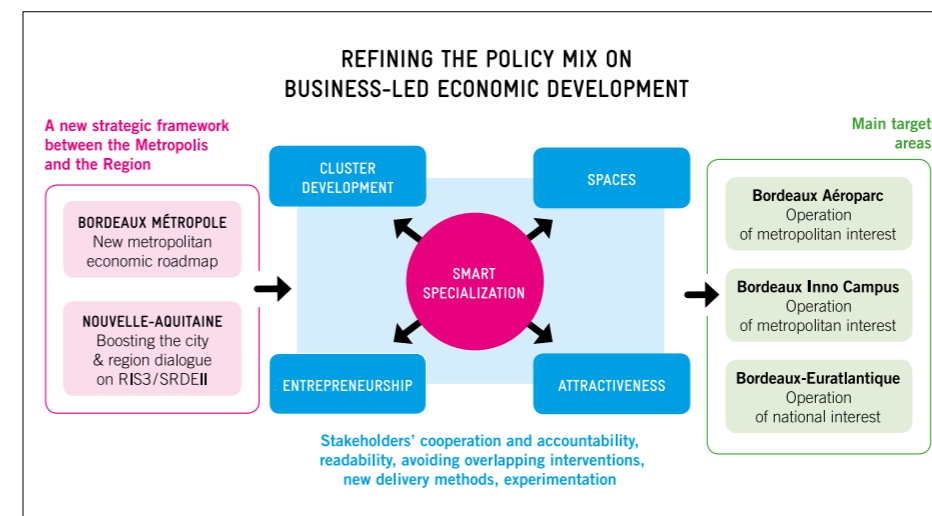
The scale of Bordeaux’s new developments is massive, and as such the topline proposals will take a long time to play out – until 2030 under current proposals. But in the short-term bringing stakeholders together in an URBACT Local Group – while working with the network of In Focus cities – helped Bordeaux improve coordination between the Aéroparc, Euratlantique, Inno’Campus and other areas of development.

As seen above, the outcome of this work is a list of feasible areas of action which avoid any overlapping between the leadership and the direction of the three different areas and government. The work aims to identify individual roles more clearly and to create performance-enhancing added value. Clear defined priorities for each area, clear leadership and a structure of ongoing meetings and collaboration to create synergy are now in place.

Though In Focus was officially completed in May 2018, the group of local stakeholders will continue to meet in order to follow up the implementation of the action plan.

Olivier Mauret, Director of Metropolitan Cooperations and Partnerships for Bordeaux Métropole, suggests In Focus is also fundamental to the evolving economic programme of the new metropolitan area. “Without URBACT In Focus, Bordeaux Métropole would have concentrated on implementing the new economic roadmap it approved in December 2016, which is already a lot. But thanks to URBACT, we could also refine the innovation policy mix with other relevant stakeholders such as the Region, the regional development and innovation agency and the University, among others.”

Olivier Mauret



A TOWN CENTRE FOR ALL SEASONS

Key information

- Location: **Šibenik (Croatia)**
- Population: **34 301**
- Involved in URBACT network: **RetailLink**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/retailink>



The old city centre of Šibenik is not recognised as a high quality retail destination, and demand fluctuates enormously between busy summer months and a lacklustre winter. The city set out with URBACT to create a marketing and cultural pull to the old town in order to balance this out.

It seems almost impossible to imagine that a town as beautiful as Šibenik could have any problems attracting people to shop there. Its large old town is a stunning collection of medieval and Renaissance buildings on the Adriatic coast of Croatia. The city has not just one but two UNESCO World Heritage sites: one more than New York. These are the exceptional Renaissance Cathedral of St James and the highly unusual 16th-century fort of St Nicholas.



A view from picturesque Šibenik

And yet in many ways Šibenik is a victim of its own success. Tourism has replaced the aluminium and steel industry as the city's major employer, and as a result the shops in the old town – subject to all the pressures of out-of-town and online retail – are becoming over-reliant on it. "We are in danger of going in the direction of other coastal cities in Croatia but we still have people who live in the city centre. It's not only touristic, it has all the administration and business functions, and we want to keep it that way," says Petar Mišura, Head of Department for Economy, Entrepreneurship and Development at Šibenik City Council. Therefore the town wanted to reach beyond its local context for international support. This is why the city joined the RetailLink network.

◆ New relationship: public and private

For Mr Mišura, the real triumph was the formation of an URBACT Local Group, a group of local stakeholders with the objective to define actions and boost the retail sector. Kristijan Domdjoni, representative of the Association of Entrepreneurs of the Old Town, became URBACT Local Group Coordinator and helped gain local support. "We are an ex-Communist society and our government always had a top-down approach, so we are in a situation where our

group of shopkeepers didn't have that informal relationship with the administration. There was suspicion, and it was hard to convince people to work with us," says Mr Mišura.

In that first meeting of the group there was a strong sense that both the local government and the retail community in Šibenik were coming from different perspectives. "[The shopowners'] complaint was that we don't have enough parking, and not only don't we have enough but it isn't cheap parking. So whilst they insisted on infrastructure, we were insisting on a marketing approach using social network and Instagram and promotional webpages," says Mr Mišura.

◆ Better infrastructure, access... and identity

It is highly unusual for local governments to become involved in helping the retail sector in Croatia, normally confining themselves to hard infrastructure: bridges, houses and so on. The success of the URBACT Local Group was really to get dialogue going between local government and the retail community. "During the time they changed their opinion but we also changed ours too," says Mr Mišura. One of the outcomes of URBACT for Šibenik was to encourage a proposal – approved though not yet implemented – for parking under the city's main square, while also improving access to parts of the old town. With so many small alleys and steps for visitors to navigate, signage is an area around

"During the time they changed their opinion but we also changed ours too."

Petar Mišura

which consensus grew, both as a means for making access easier and as an opportunity to give the old town an identity.

The council in turn was able to gain support from the retail sector through the URBACT process. As their integrated plan puts it, "the local action group's efforts should

also lead to a range of stronger marketing activities, promoting the shopping experience in the old city centre by using online tools, mobile apps, organising sales events and all kinds of events to ensure longer stays in the old town centre throughout the year, not only in summer." Training programmes and workshops have been introduced to improve customer care and market research amongst retailers – run by the Croatian Chamber of Economy, Croatian Chamber of Trades and Crafts, and Šibenik Polytechnic.

As part of the local group team's extensive research into the problems facing retail in the old town, they interviewed several residents, including Želimir Mikulić, a professor at the polytechnic. He considered retail businesses located in the old town of Šibenik in this balanced way: "Today, people visit shopping centres in order to spend time, not money. If the city centre manages to provide a good cultural and leisure proposal together with a good retail offer, it will get people back."

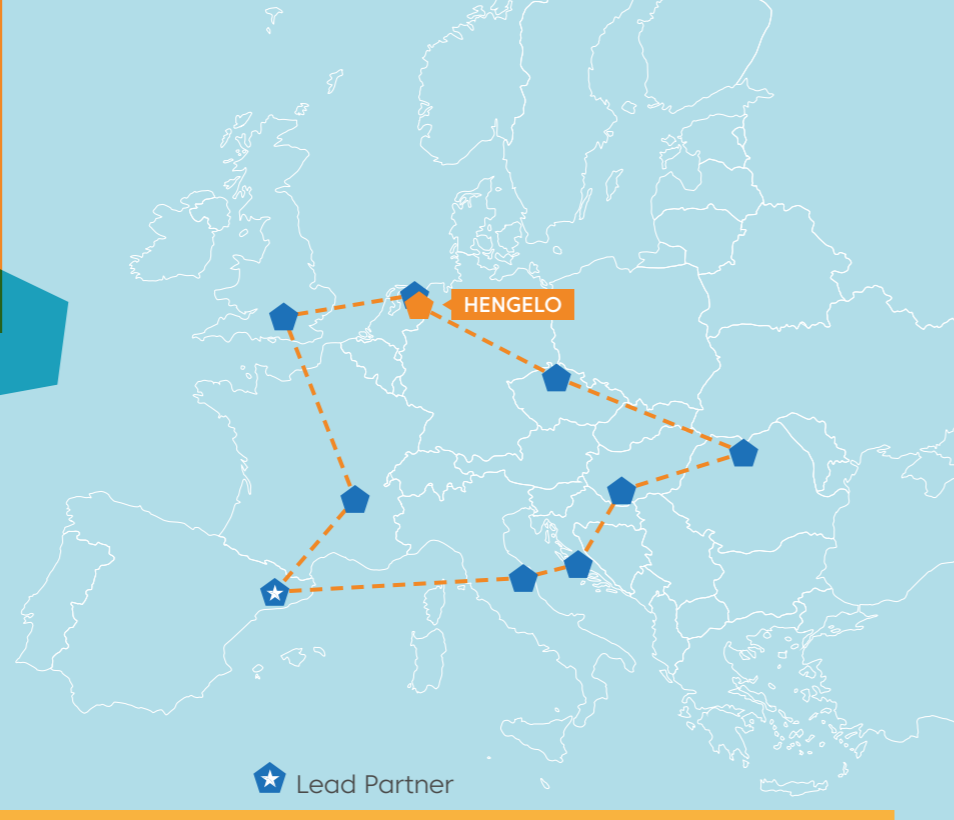


A pedestrian street in the centre of the city

TURNING A LOCAL VISION INTO ACTION FOR A VIBRANT CITY CENTRE

Key information

- 📍 Location: **Hengelo (Netherlands)**
- 👤 Population: **80 650**
- 🏠 Involved in URBACT network: **RetailLink**
- 🌐 More information: <http://urbact.eu/retailink>



Struggling to keep up with neighbouring cities and shifting shopping habits, Hengelo’s post-World War Two centre was not pulling in the crowds. The URBACT RetailLink network helped locals cooperate better to build a clear, integrated plan for attracting quality retail — and shoppers — back to Hengelo’s city centre.

“Great functionality — good accessibility for example — but a low experience value,” is how Hengelo’s RetailLink Project Coordinator Susan Meijer describes the centre of her city in the east of the Netherlands. After Hengelo was bombed in World War Two, much of the former old town was redeveloped. In the 1960s, a Dutch market square was added, but it did not provide a convivial environment for modern retail, which relies heavily on cultural and social provisions to encourage shoppers to stay on and enjoy a longer visit.

In 2015, before Hengelo joined RetailLink, a group of local stakeholders, including the Foundation Centre Management Hengelo (FCMH), the Foundation Real Estate Hengelo (FREH), the finance sector, housing corporations and local government, had drafted a report called Future-Proof Town, identifying a wish-list of areas in the city that needed improving. The report wanted increased inner-city visitor numbers, and staying times; higher business turnover and real estate values and improved business climate; and a more compact city centre with mutually reinforcing and recognisable districts.

📍 Vote early, vote often

The local government reached out to URBACT to help their citizens carry out an extended problem analysis and put

forth a vision with a set of measures to accomplish it. An URBACT Local Group was formed, including local shop owners and business people already working in cooperation before URBACT. Over the course of two years, from 2016 to 2018, this group enabled the municipality to work with local stakeholders to identify distinctive historical sites downtown and build a new plan for enhancing the area around them, promoting diverse shops in a safe atmosphere to attract people from Hengelo and beyond. They entirely remodeled how car parking and bicycle parking worked in the town, plans that are currently being delivered. Through working with the RetailLink network, the URBACT Local Group created a series of proposals to reduce retail vacancy by a vital 10% but — importantly — in a manner that suited the town.

In November 2017, for example, the group organised a vote among all residents from the age of 8 up in the town to choose the best redesign of Market Square. A scheme by the pioneering Dutch landscape architects West 8 was chosen and, buoyed by the positive experience that the popular vote engendered, the local group laid out plans to renovate a prominent 1960s-built office building and transform it into an apartment block. Other proposals included converting the area around a key church — the Lambertus Basilica — into a green and quiet place. Further

plans are being drawn up to redesign a main thoroughfare and core shopping areas.

📍 A local shop for local people

But the plan is not simply directed to the physical landscape of the town: the URBACT Local Group is also supporting and coaching start-ups, with the help of an organisation called ROZ (Regional Organization Self-Employed) which offers advice and training to entrepreneurs. The scheme has drawn in a subsidy from the provincial government and hopes to achieve an increase of 10% of new businesses in the city centre. The ambition is that the vacancy rate for retail will be reduced not simply by providing cheap rents to any outlet, but by also providing a platform for local businesses.

Other cities in the RetailLink network helped Hengelo out on topics such as the customer journey, city identity marketing and retail trends. From towns like Fermo (IT) and Romans (FR), Hengelo’s local team gained an appreciation of a sense of place and a sense of history as a means of drawing in and retaining customers. “Among other things, the atmospheric public space in the historic city centres; a pedestrian zone in the city centre with attention for art, water and greenery,” says Ms Meijer. This prompted those leading the renovation of Hengelo to restore or reassert what makes it unique rather than copy other towns. Ms Meijer adds, “You get fresh ideas, but you are realistic about what does and does not work in your own municipality.”

Hengelo was able to set out a realistic plan to implement this local vision for a lively city centre. Underway at the moment are plans to improve the provision of public art in the town



The RetailLink partners in Hengelo

through working with local artists and arts organisations as well as working on the branding of the city and how it is best disseminated through social media and conventional media outlets such as newspapers and TV. A lasting effect of URBACT has been to improve the conversations that are needed to achieve all these policies.

“Local cooperation with the most important partners has improved and resulted in a joint course and action plan as a result of URBACT.”

Susan Meijer



A vision of Hengelo's downtown for the near future

STRENGTHENING THE INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM IN PORTO

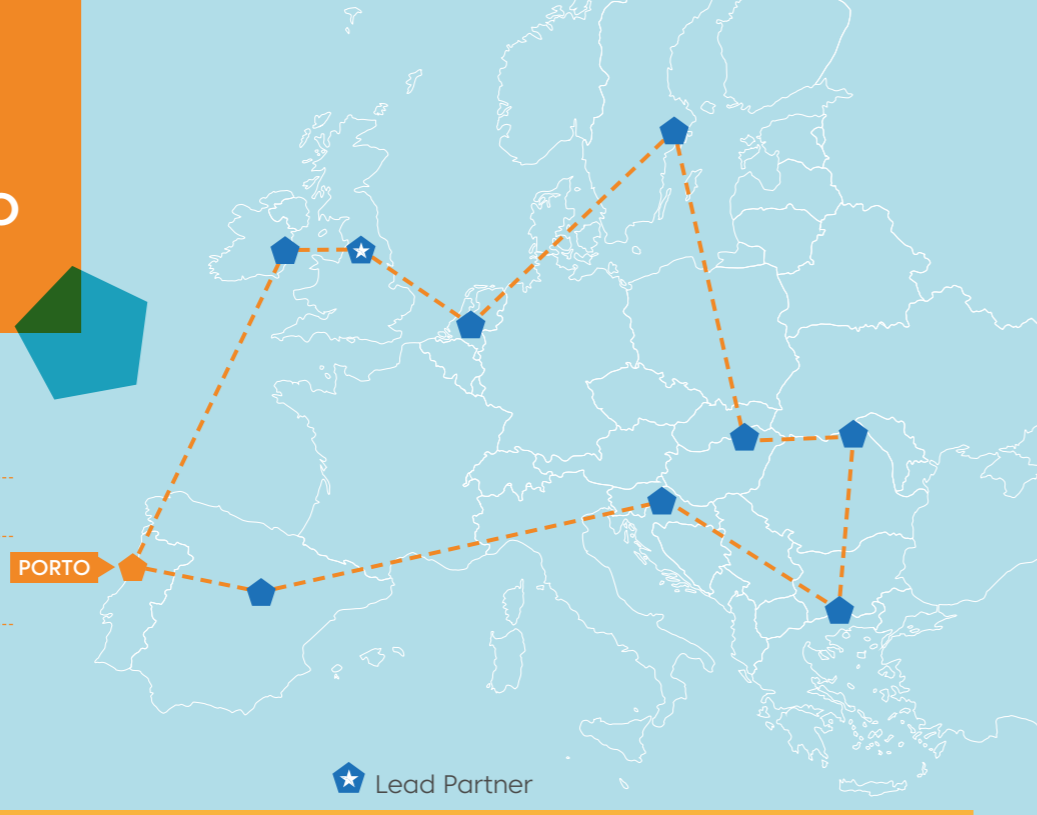
Key information

Location: **Porto (Portugal)**

Population: **237 600**

Involved in URBACT network: **SmartImpact**

More information: <http://urbact.eu/smartimpact>



Through its participation in the URBACT SmartImpact network, the city of Porto consolidated its strategic approach to supporting innovation and entrepreneurship in the city. This is a key part of its overall strategy to become an increasingly smart city.

Porto is the most important economic, educational and cultural centre of northern Portugal. It has a historic centre classified as a UNESCO World Heritage site and is an important tourism destination. It is also home to six universities, several higher education institutes, 69 R&D centres and emerging business clusters in the IT and creative sectors, biotechnology and health, and mechanical engineering.

Building on a 'Smart City' approach

Porto joined the URBACT SmartImpact network of cities in order to consolidate and develop efforts it had already taken to become a 'smart city'. In 2004, it created a private non-profit association, 'Porto Digital' to promote Information Communication Technologies projects in Porto metropolitan area. Porto Digital put in place a large-scale fibre-optic backbone and public access Wi-Fi network, before launching a strategy to support Porto as a knowledge-based city.

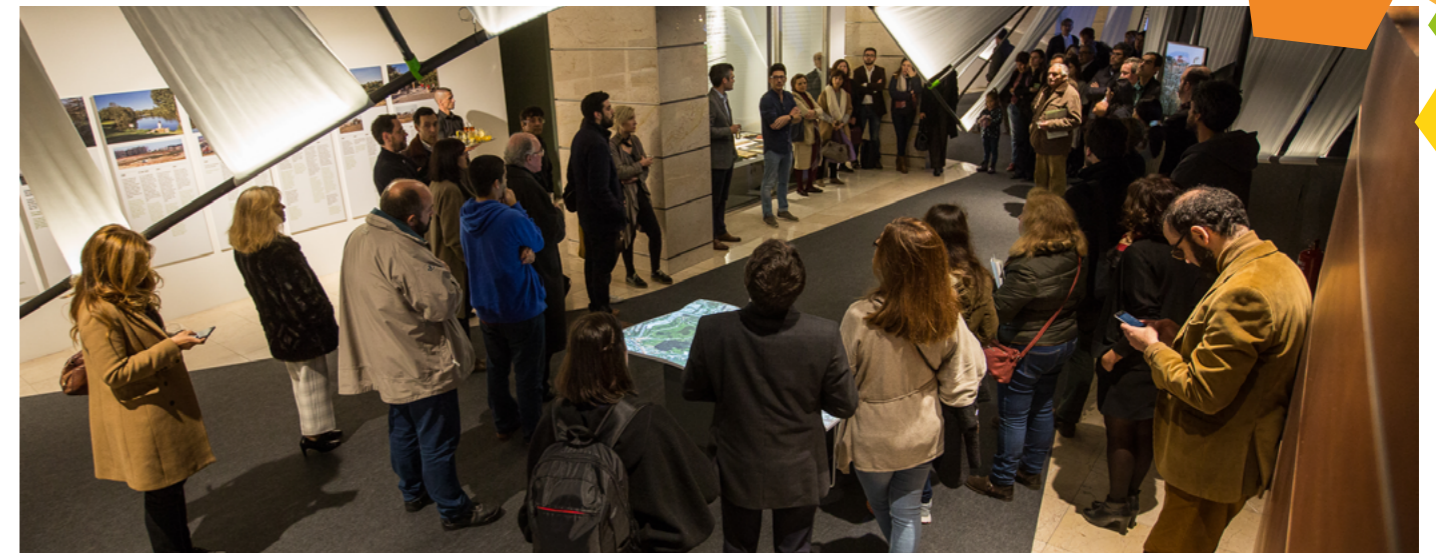
Margarida Campolargo, Head of Porto Digital's Smart City Unit, explains that the main aim of participating in SmartImpact was "to improve the impact that we are having with our [Smart City] projects on the city infrastructure... We addressed mainly issues of open data, the innovation ecosystem and then a few on policy-making."

Taking part in this URBACT network brought a new way of working to Porto Digital and the municipality. "The fact that we gathered several departments of the municipality [in the URBACT Local Group]... that they started knowing about each other and working with each other had a very positive impact... taking into account [the city's] entire ecosystem and innovative capacity," she says.

SmartImpact also enabled Porto to take inspiration from the other cities in the network. As Ms Campolargo explains: "We learnt, for example, how Eindhoven changed their organisational structure, how Manchester is dealing with their own structure, Dublin and others. And then the networking of course... to have an outsider's vision on what we are doing is very important for self-development."



Meeting for the ScaleUp Porto



Meeting at the Porto Innovation Hub

Consolidating the city's innovation ecosystem

The Integrated Action Plan developed by Porto's URBACT Local Group has the stated aim to create a "sustainable Smart City Urban Platform – not only at a technological level but essentially at an organisational level – ensuring the 'de-siloing' of the present organisational structure."

Its first strand of action is on assessing the needs of citizens, the municipality, companies and entrepreneurs to better direct the smart city approach. A second strand focuses on capacity building and training to support the municipality

and municipal companies to design and implement smart strategies. The third strand incorporates and seeks to reinforce three existing initiatives of the local innovation ecosystem: 1. ScaleUp Porto; 2. The Porto Innovation Hub; and 3. Desafios Porto.

Under the ScaleUp Porto initiative, the municipality aims to turn successful entrepreneurs into role models, mentors, experts, teachers and investors for the next generation of innovation businesses. It targets companies which are moving beyond their start-up phase with activities including masterclasses, workshops and business networking events.

The Porto Innovation Hub is a semi-permanent space that offers a regular programme of activities including: exhibitions; talks; group sessions with the general public and schools; and labs and practical workshops with research

"SmartImpact is an extremely important project that has led to the creation of the Action Plan with very concrete measures. The Plan benefitted from information and shared strategies on actions that other cities had been developing."

*Felipe Araújo,
Porto's Deputy Mayor*

bodies. It aims to provide a focal point to demonstrate the potential of innovation in the city's transformation.

Desafios Porto is a competition that provides EUR 250 000 to local innovation projects targeting improved quality of life for Porto's citizens. It aims both to address the city's more pressing challenges and provide an impetus to entrepreneurship.

Providing for long-term smart governance

Finally, the Plan contains a strand of action on smarter governance based around providing a new 'intelligent' layer to city governance to integrate and interconnect the various elements. It includes a new 'urban platform' to provide a logical architecture to data flows within and across municipal services and improvements to the Integrated Management Centre – launched in 2015 – that provides real-time information from cameras and monitors across the city on, for example, traffic flows.

This strand also aims to deliver: an effective open data strategy; 'hackacity' events to test the use of big data for creating innovative city solutions; piloting of new smart city policies; and a new smart city manifesto for Porto.

Margarida Campolargo

Porto Digital

The most important impact [was] mindset change, the municipality seeing and understanding what can happen elsewhere and how we can change [and] evolve. We can put all the technology in there, but it might not solve our challenges unless we really work with the people. Actually we are going to maintain this [URBACT Local] Group after the project closes so this is a very good outcome because people are going to reflect on the smart city strategies way beyond the project lifetime.

BREAKING DOWN SILOS IN SMART CITY ADMINISTRATION

Key information

- 📍 Location: **Zagreb (Croatia)**

- 👤 Population: **790 000**

- 🏢 Involved in URBACT network: **SmartImpact**

- 📄 More information: <http://urbact.eu/smartimpact>



★ Lead Partner

Through its participation in the URBACT SmartImpact network, Zagreb has initiated 11 projects within one Integrated Action Plan aiming to deliver a systemic approach to becoming an increasingly 'smart city'. The actions will be monitored and improved on an ongoing basis as part of the overall development strategy of the city.

Zagreb is the capital of Croatia and enjoys a diverse economy melding strong cultural and architectural heritage with modern high-tech industries and service sector. The city has developed several strategies to become an increasingly 'smart city', including a 'Sustainable Energy Action Plan', 'ICT System and e-Governance Development Strategy' and 'Open Data Portal'.

However, the various smart city initiatives remained relatively unconnected. Mirjana Zubak, Head of Office for EU Programmes and Projects in Zagreb City Authority, explains that "The SmartImpact network came... at the right time [for us] when we started to think about how we could introduce a systemic approach to smart city development in the city of Zagreb... allow[ing] us to more effectively apply smart city development initiatives and activities."

📍 Facilitating a multi-disciplinary approach

An important step in the development of action ideas was to bring the most relevant partners together to scope out the vision and needs. These formed an URBACT Local Group that worked on project strands, each initiated by multi-disciplinary teams comprising representatives of the city

authority, Zagreb Development Agency, Zagreb University, scientific and research centres, incubation centres/hubs, companies and consultants.

As Anka Đurić, Head of Department 'Analysis and Business Process Improvement' in Zagreb city authority and URBACT Local Group coordinator, says, "With some starting challenges, the overall experience [of the URBACT Local Group] was positive. It was a process that led to mutual learning and growth of participants corresponding to their level of involvement."

📍 A living-lab-type action plan

The work of the URBACT Local Group developed 11 project initiatives that together form the Zagreb SmartImpact Integrated Action Plan (see box). "The Integrated Action Plan produced in this way has a strong sense of ownership among its creators, which is a good precondition for its implementation in future," highlights Ms Đurić.

The Plan does not focus on technological solutions so much as governance structures, processes, financing, and models of regulations and incentives to deliver a smarter city. It is closely aligned with the official 'City of Zagreb Development Strategy for the period to 2020'.



SmartImpact final event, 20 March 2018

Importantly, the actions will be implemented and continuously monitored and improved by the same multi-stakeholder team that developed the idea as part of a 'living-lab' style approach. The city has also committed to ensure that the system of regulations and incentives is adapted to make it supportive of the new models being developed.

Implementation is further supported by integration of the action plan into Zagreb's existing Digital Business Platform (ARIS), which maps and monitors projects and processes. According to Anka Đurić, this has "brought an additional quality to the Integrated Action Plan by identifying and mapping interconnections and integrative components of all IAP projects, from infrastructure, resources, stakeholder-outreach and usability perspectives."

📍 Real transnational learning

The URBACT Local Group members benefitted from exchange and learning with each other, but also with representatives of the partner cities. Ms. Đurić explains: "Group members with specific knowledge and experience participated in transnational meetings which covered specific themes within the project... Those [exchanges] gave them new ideas on how to establish better cooperation with local stakeholders [and]... how to deliver some desired activities."

"One of the biggest motivations to be involved in this project was a great network - ten cities at different levels of development in [different aspects]. I think we learned a lot from each other."

Mirjana Zubak

Mirjana Zubak enthuses: "One of the biggest motivations to be involved in this project was a great network - ten cities at different levels of development in [different aspects]. I think we learned a lot from each other." Anka Đurić highlights the value of collecting best practices on the use of new business models and technologies, such as the 'Porto Innovation Hub', Eindhoven's 'Smart Society Data Charter' and 'Smart Guadalajara - Using Technology to Support Service Delivery'.

Zagreb SmartImpact Integrated Action Plan 11 initiatives



Organisational Development

1. Improve city authority organisational structures and processes for the provision of smart city services.
2. Engage citizens and local stakeholders in local innovation processes, including through a defined co-creation process and online platform.



Data Governance & Integration

3. Create an 'Intelligent platform' for managing city authority interactions with businesses, citizens and other administrative bodies.
4. Establish an Intelligent Cyber Security System to protect the city's digital services
5. Implement an effective data protection system
6. Develop an artificial intelligence 'zAgl Virtual City Officer' to respond to citizens 24/7
7. Improve the IT systems (including user platform) of the Zagreb Holding group, which provides utility, energy and other services to citizens, businesses and visitors.
8. Use an Energy Atlas - showing the spatial characteristics of energy consumption - to enable new smart city planning decisions



Supporting Local Innovation Ecosystems

9. Create an innovation-focused business incubator and accelerator 'Digital Stream Zagreb' linking city authorities with research institutions, companies, NGOs and citizens.
10. Develop new business models for reconstruction of a more ecological and energy-efficient public lighting system



Smart Finance and Procurement

11. Build a new strategic framework for financing and public procurement of innovative solutions

WHEN LOCALS REAWAKEN BIG EMPTY BUILDINGS

Key information

- Location: **Naples (Italy)**
- Population: **983 755**
- Involved in URBACT network: **2nd Chance**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/2nd-chance>



In 2015, in an attempt to find ways to (re)use large, abandoned building complexes in the city, Naples initiated the URBACT 2nd Chance network gathering ten other EU cities. Thanks to this experience, a new life was given to Santissima Trinità delle Monache complex, an abandoned military hospital in the heart of the city.

Covering 25 000 m², an area the size of three and half football pitches, the Santissima Trinità delle Monache complex needed to be made more permeable. Not a straightforward task given that – unlike other buildings in the 2nd Chance network – it is listed due to its historical importance. It was established in the 17th century as a convent and was converted into a military hospital after Napoleon invaded south Italy.

Planning the first steps and actions

When entering the 2nd Chance network, Naples set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to define the first steps and actions. In September 2016, local group coordinator – embedded in the local authority – published an open call on the Naples council website for expressions of interest on how the building complex might be used. 43 groups expressed their interest by presenting a project, an idea or a temporary use.

This call for ideas was a bold move which garnered new ideas for potential uses, as did site surveys by students from local architecture schools. It also gave the widest possible buy-in to reactivating a huge site which could meet multiple needs. On the constitution of the URBACT Local Group, Roberta Nicchia, coordinator of this group, says, “50% were citizens and others were representatives of associations, NGOs, social enterprises that work in



The Santissima Trinità delle Monache complex

the neighbourhood, and there was also the department of architecture from the University of Naples.” Proposals for the complex of buildings then evolved out of a very articulated participatory process that lasted more than one year and consisted of 13 plenary meetings, one open space technology event, different thematic round-tables, co-design workshops, experimentation of temporary uses and other on-site events.

Creating an incubator

Through 2nd Chance, the municipality found practical ways to feed local ideas into realistic plans for reusing the site, through enabling multiple users and securing key tenants. The URBACT group opened a physical space within the building complex in 2017 – a kind of open laboratory for the inclusion and participation of the local community. They also combined this visioning process with public events. These were then grouped under four main objectives: firstly, to initiate the green regeneration of the San Martino Hill starting from restoring the green areas within the complex; then to physically reintegrate the building into the city and restore the historical buildings; to use the building as an incubator for circular and sharing economy and finally draft an Integrated Action Plan. What would have been different without the URBACT process? “There would have been a much more bureaucratic approach in dealing with the regeneration of this large, abandoned urban complex,” says Ms Nicchia.

“If Naples had not promoted this URBACT network, our target building – the Santissima Trinità delle Monache complex – would still be a forgotten place, out of the collective consciousness. Now its regeneration has become one of the priorities in the city.”

Roberta Nicchia

The group acknowledged different timeframes within these objectives, from short to long term, identified figures who would be responsible, and listed interested parties. For example, to address the sharing economy in the short term, one suggestion was a repair café – a concept that originated in Amsterdam in 2009 but has spread throughout Europe – as an example of participatory, bottom-up economic activity. The group thought this resonated with the self-supporting networks in the impoverished districts of Naples neighbouring the Santissima Trinità delle Monache.



Meeting of the URBACT Local Group

From plan to practical application

As it emerged in the visioning process, the ‘sleeping giant’ of the Trinità delle Monache was never going to be replaced by one single use. Since October 2017, the URBACT group has coordinated a number of temporary uses of the building complex with existing associations like the Palazzetto Urban, a youth centre for teenagers, and the Association of the Quartieri Spagnoli which takes care of local children. Part of the structure has been purchased by the private university of Suor Orsola Benincasa and is awaiting renovation works.

This successful experiment inspired Naples to make, among other steps, a resolution (No. 458) that encourages citizens to submit expressions of interest to implement pilot projects aimed at improving underused or disused municipal assets through temporary uses. Santissima Trinità delle Monache is on good track to be financed, according to Ms Nicchia, “We identified a wide range of different financial sources”, including private and public investment.

Would all this have happened without URBACT’s help? Ms Nicchia is clear, “If Naples had not joined – actually promoted – this URBACT network, our target building – the Santissima Trinità delle Monache complex – would still be a forgotten place, out of the collective consciousness, while now its regeneration has become one of the priorities in the city”.



Open consultation on the future of Santissima Trinità delle Monache

RE-ACTIVATING OLD BUILDINGS FOR LOCAL PEOPLE'S BENEFIT

Key information

- Location: **Caen (France)**
- Population: **108 950**
- Involved in URBACT network: **2nd Chance**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/2nd-chance>



Over the decades, Caen's 600-hectare industrial and port wasteland, known as the Peninsula, has become overgrown and its buildings dilapidated. Through the URBACT 2nd Chance network, the city mobilised local stakeholders and citizens and identified new uses and services in abandoned buildings that would serve the needs of the surrounding population.

When the city joined the URBACT 2nd Chance network, they set up a group of committed activists, councillors, business people and the Greater Caen District Council (URBACT Local Group). Their objective was to reflect on how to redevelop the Peninsula site having in mind the lack of housing as one of the main problems that slowly makes families leave the city.

The URBACT Local Group shifted the approach to thinking first about what residents might like to live around and what makes a place attractive before housing is built rather than adding it in as an afterthought.

So first, Caen accessed expertise and inspiration to identify two abandoned post-war industrial buildings, 'The Barrels' and 'The Tunnel'.

Getting inspiration from existing practices

The URBACT Local Group decided to meet and work in the Peninsula in order to be more connected to the ground. The members of the group used to gather in 'Le Pavillon', a vacant building being reused as an information and discussion 'space' where the city exchanges with citizens on the development of the peninsula and city-planning in general.



The abandoned Barrels



The Barrels of the future: an urban farm

'Le Pavillon' is an example of the potential use of similar buildings since it has developed a variety of artistic and cultural activities to draw the attention of the city's inhabitants to the pilot site and get their ideas about how the site could be better used. Activities included 'Drawing walks' to help people discover the vacant site; a street art festival; workshops for children to raise the awareness of the abandoned place; and even a 'Biennale of Architecture and Urbanism' about the development of the Peninsula and the reactivation of the buildings.

The successful reconversion project of Le Pavillon was of great inspiration for the URBACT Local Group. Using the participative OPERA methodology (Own, Pair, Explain, Rank, and Arrange) to gather, rank and prioritise ideas of stakeholders, the Group managed to define specific uses for other buildings.

An Integrated Action Plan for the site

This is how, in June 2018, the city with its URBACT Local Group presented their newly published Integrated Action Plan focusing on the reconversion projects of two buildings in front of 'Le Pavillon', the so-called 'Barrels' and 'Tunnel' buildings. The plan proposed that The Barrels, formerly a warehouse, would become an urban farm. A survey commissioned by the URBACT Local Group had shown that its light metal framework was in good condition even if the stone walls were not. The second building, The Tunnel, an old prefab concrete factory, would become a cultural lab welcoming various artistic associations.

Several complex decisions were made to arrive to this point. First, the right building had to be chosen from the

many existing ones in the wider former port area. A new masterplan was developed in February 2016 by Dutch architects MVRDV for the entire area, allocating where the housing would go, before Caen joined 2nd Chance network. In September 2016, the local group met to take what they called an urban promenade through the site to find buildings that were suitable for reuse and might work well within the masterplan aiming to preserve traces of the past. Caen chose two face-to-face buildings to be at the heart of the new development area. As a result, in March 2017, Caen City Council bought The Tunnel from a private owner at the request of the URBACT Local Group – without yet being sure what it would be used for. Regarding The Barrels, Caen signed an agreement with the owner for three years, allowing further reflection on the project, a test-phase and its feasibility in the long-term.

Since September 2018, the buildings identified for reuse by the URBACT Local Group are being converted by the council's building services department. Funding requests have been submitted to national funds as well as ERDF to convert the Tunnel and the Barrels for their intended use. It will take years to build out the wider masterplan for the Peninsula area but this investment is what the area needs now.

- The Tunnel cultural project will be operational within 3 years. In the meantime, the first 300 dwellings will be delivered.
- The 'Urban Farm for the Barrels' project is the focus of the new URBACT Transfer network RURBAN to support its successful implementation.



The Tunnel before transformation



An artistic factory for The Tunnel

BREATHING NEW LIFE INTO ABANDONED SPACES

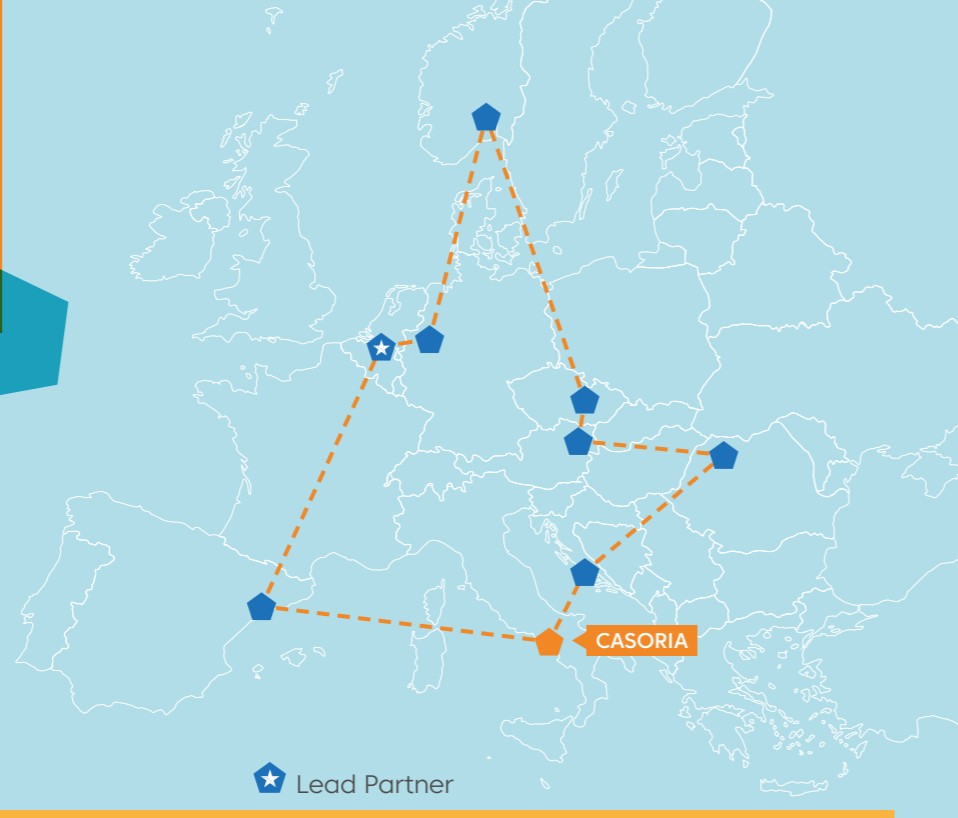
Key information

- 📍 Location: **Casoria (Italy)**

- 👤 Population: **77 000**

- 🏠 Involved in URBACT network: **sub>urban**

- 📄 More information: <http://urbact.eu/sub.urban>



Casoria is a heavily urbanised city that has suffered from years of political mismanagement. Thanks to participation in the URBACT sub>urban network, the municipality has been able to kick-start a process of community-led regeneration, beginning with the urban fringe.

Located 10 km from Naples, in a mess of urban sprawl beneath a major airport flight path, Casoria has struggled through years of economic and social crisis. If it once benefited from the post-war boom, there is little evidence today beyond the shells of old factories. A maze of roads and railway lines chokes the chaotic modern city, which is home to an estimated 7 000 unauthorised buildings. Many of these sit empty, surrounded by concrete. Unemployment is at 30% – rising to 65% among young people – and more and more people are forced to leave the area to find work elsewhere.

Trying to improve these conditions is notoriously difficult. Some problems are a reflection of national and regional inequalities. Others go back decades or are rooted deep in society. Despite this, in 2013 the municipality drew up an ambitious new urban plan, based on sustainable ecological models. The idea was to develop a network of abandoned and underused spaces that would be transformed into green or cultural hubs as the basis for a radical regeneration. After two years of preliminary work, as they waited for approval from the regional government, the municipality joined URBACT to share planning experiences with other cities.

Starting from zero

“We had no experience of an initiative like this,” says Francesca Avitabile, an architect in the municipality’s Public Works Department. “Before anything else we had to learn how to work as a community.” Thanks to their participation in URBACT, the city set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to plan actions. The group’s meetings were large while the minutes were published online. The aim was to plan a series of small interventions in line with the broader urban strategy. From the offset, for example, owners of key brownfield sites were asked to provide temporary public paths on their land to connect future regeneration sites directly with the city centre. This was a simple and effective way of challenging the city’s fragmented geography.



The transnational meeting at Michelangelo Park

The group closely followed a step-by-step strategy, which formed the basis of their Integrated Action Plan. They had already identified Michelangelo Park, an overgrown ex-military base, as a pilot site from which to begin their gradual improvement of the town. “Transforming this was a practical demonstration of future visions, a prefiguration of those urban transformations that would be infeasible today,” says Enrico Formato, an external expert for Casoria, based at the University of Naples. During the development, the local group coordinated guerrilla gardening events and citizen-led clean-up initiatives. Even the furniture was co-designed during participatory sessions and procured for free, thanks to a programme of public sponsorship.

Rebuilding a local identity

“As a result of URBACT, a network of associations and civic committees has been formed and consolidated in Casoria.”

Enrico Formato

political changes. In 2016, a new municipal administration was elected. And while the new party supported the park, they slowed down the wider implementation of the 2013

In April 2018, Michelangelo Park was finally opened for use and it is now the biggest green space in the town. “This was the first tangible result of participatory methods in Casoria,” says Ms Avitabile. “It was the start of a whole new process for the community.” Even more remarkably, this was achieved in spite of sizeable



Children planting in Michelangelo Park

Structural Plan. That the sub>urban integrated plan survived this shift in policy is testament to the project’s popularity among citizens.

“As a result of URBACT, a network of associations and civic committees has been formed and consolidated in Casoria,” says Mr Formato. “Today even without a strong coordination of the municipal administration, they are carrying forward the ideas and methodologies shared during the sub>urban experience.” The ongoing development at another green site, Boccaccio Park, is the most visible sign of this unfolding impact. The main legacy, however, has been a shift in mentality. “URBACT is very important for people here,” confirms Ms Avitabile. “This wasn’t just about a park; it helped us rebuild our local identity.”



The Mayor of Casoria, Pasquale Fuccio (November 2016)

FILLING THE 'IN-BETWEEN' SPACES WITH TRUST

Key information

Location: **Brno (Czech Republic)**

Population: **375 000**

Involved in URBACT network: **sub>urban**

More information: <http://urbact.eu/sub.urban>



The view of Brno from Red Hill

Brno's fringe is plagued by poor infrastructure and weak social ties. As part of their effort to tackle this, the municipality is using URBACT tools to trial a new citizen-centred model of regeneration in the Red Hill area.

As the Czech Republic's second largest city, Brno is an important cultural centre, driven by a strong, diverse economy. Following a rapid increase in population throughout the 20th century, the post-communist period saw a move towards suburbanisation led by the private sector. The consequences have proved particularly complex. Today developable land is running out and while demand for housing continues to rise, the number of new builds is declining. As a result young people and poorer residents are being priced out of the market. Some already-established communities face parallel problems. While many suburbs are well connected by bus links and tram lines, and enjoy good quality services, large pockets of "in between" spaces, in the fringe, have been left behind.

A plan for the hidden gem of the peri-urban city

For over a decade the municipality has been working on a polycentric development plan which, among other things, aims to regenerate these neglected areas. URBACT has provided an important source of innovative tools to help put this into action. As part of the sub>urban network, the city saw an opportunity to work with URBACT methods at a smaller, neighbourhood level. This time their aim was to experiment with a new model of fringe development through the regeneration of a single site.

Finding a pilot location required unprecedented cooperation between municipal offices. As a requirement from the



Cleaning up the pilot site of Red Hill



The final local group meeting

"URBACT was really useful for helping us develop a vision for Red Hill."

Kateřina Pavlíková

URBACT programme, the city's strategic department set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to link with the transport, investment and housing offices. Together, these groups co-created a set of criteria to guide the selection process. After weeks of conversation they decided on Red Hill, a potential residential area situated on a border site between the city centre and the Bohunice neighbourhood, which is home to a series of allotment gardens and a former brownfield site. In addition to problems of services and infrastructure, Red Hill was suffering from regular sewage leaks and some of its green spaces were being used as illegal dumps.

The objective of the local group was to draw up an Integrated Action Plan based on new techniques introduced by URBACT. "Throughout the project we discovered a lot of new tools, mainly about coordinating administration, like making a problem tree, collecting all the data, mapping relations of ownership," confirms Kateřina Pavlíková, Expert for Regional Policy at the municipality. "URBACT was really useful for helping us develop a vision for Red Hill. Doing it in a combined way definitely made some processes more open and understandable to local people later on."

The official legacy of Brno's participation in the network is an urban study of the Red Hill site, which was developed as an extension of the Integrated Action Plan. It was presented at the final local group meeting where citizens were invited to speak with the experts and ask them questions directly. Red Hill itself is still undergoing a geological survey and various transport models are being tested to verify the proposals in the urban study. But while the renovation will

be implemented step-by-step during the coming years, the processes employed during sub>urban have already been recognised as valuable and potentially transferable tools. "We managed to show other departments that if you work in cooperation with locals it can really pay off," concludes Martina Pacasová, City Strategic Manager. "Hopefully this will have an impact on their work as well."

A forum for regeneration

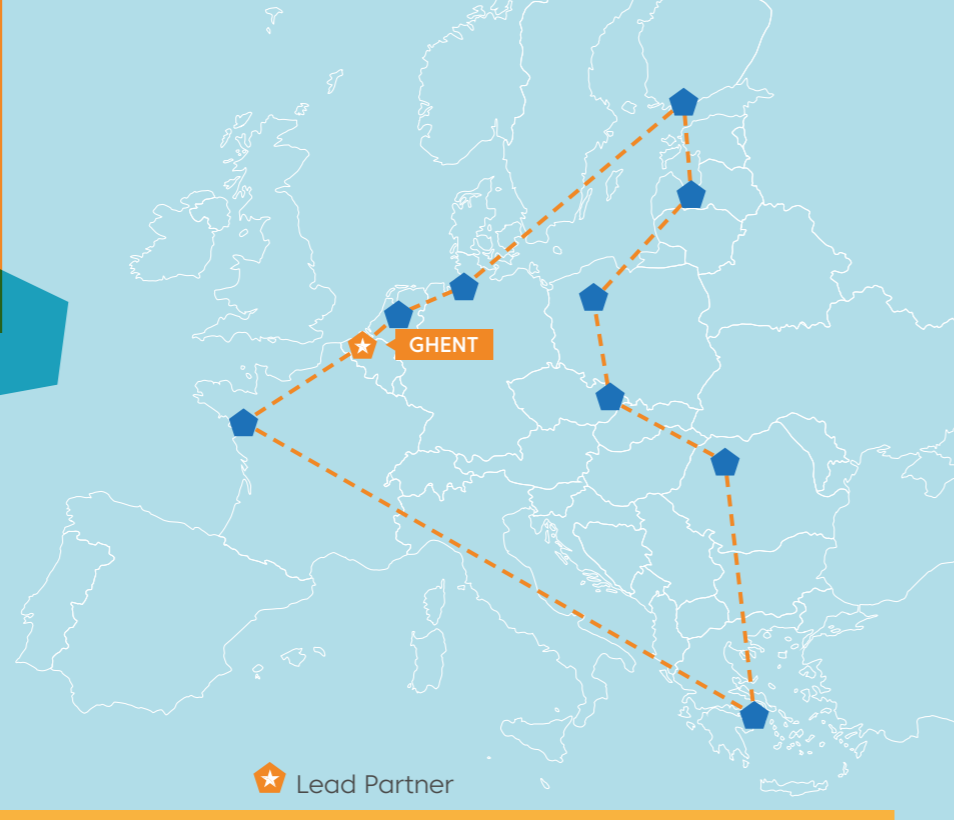
"Usually the municipality just does all this and then reveals the plan," reflects Ms Pacasová, "but as part of the sub>urban project we wanted to try something new." A second, parallel local group was established, made up of all stakeholders in the Red Hill area, from individual residents and gardening associations, to big local employers and land-users. These were involving up to 90 people. Everything was written down and all decisions communicated back to the community via email and web pages.

"The municipality doesn't usually organise meetings like this," says Ms Pacasová, "so we didn't know how people would react." Initially there were conflicts of interest, arising from the complex ownership of the Red Hill site, but after two years of working with participatory methods the municipality and citizens learnt how to collaborate more effectively. One of the best symbols of the progress made was the 'Clean Up Red Hill' event, which saw over 100 people coming together on two occasions to work in the site. The municipal managers were among them. "It was a nice way to show citizens that even office workers can get their hands dirty and we're not just chatting and sketching but really doing stuff," says Ms Pacasová. "I think we gained some trust from this."

INSPIRING A TEMPORARY USE ROADMAP

Key information

- Location: **Ghent (Belgium)**
- Population: **259 083**
- Involved in URBACT network: **REFILL**
- More information:
<http://urbact.eu/refill>



As REFILL Lead Partner, Ghent drew on its experiences and collaborated with partner cities to develop transferable tools for the temporary activation of vacant city spaces.

Grassroots Ghent

Picturesque Ghent has a rich history – a former centre of the textile industry, it was one of the largest and wealthiest northern European cities in the Middle Ages. In recent decades, however, the city has drawn new attention as a pioneer of innovative, community-centred urbanism.

In the 1990s, Ghent established ‘neighbourhood managers’ – civil servants who connect with citizens, their initiatives and new ideas. In 2007, the city started experimenting with temporary use of vacant spaces, creating ‘De Site’ on

a former factory site, with community allotments, sports facilities and an urban farmstead. This inspired similar projects across the city. Neighbourhood managers now act as brokers for temporary use initiatives, engaging citizens and signalling opportunities. In 2014, the city established a Temporary Use Fund to incentivise initiatives that contribute to urban liveability.

Because of this wealth of experience – matched with the desire to formalise such activity, evaluate best practice and collaborate internationally – Ghent became Lead Partner for the URBACT REFILL network.



URBACT Local Group visit temporary use projects in Ghent



Ghent's Match-Makers event

Speed dating for projects

REFILL set out to pool expertise and develop best practice tools for temporary use. One of them was the matchmaking tool, developed and piloted in the REFILL network and tested in Poznań (PL), Cluj-Napoca (RO) and Ghent. This is a pitch-centred “speed dating” event connecting city governments and local initiatives in a productive, structured way to develop opportunities for temporary use.

Ghent was looking for ideas and coordinators to activate the city’s old library building temporarily before its redevelopment, kick-starting a new dynamic in the city centre. Ghent set up an URBACT Local Group bringing together 42 stakeholders from municipal services, start-ups, community organisations and urban planners to define actions. In early 2017, the city organised the Bibmarkt match-making event, gathering 147 speakers to pitch their

idea for the temporary use in the library. Initiatives that did not win the bid have since found other matches and projects, proving the multifaceted benefit of the process.

A consortium led by local non-profit Timelab won the library bid, and in May 2017, the building reopened as NEST (New Established State of Temporality), a space for making, networking, collaboration and experimentation. During twelve months, NEST hosted over 30 bottom-up, community-focused initiatives. The project – including a cafe, event and co-working spaces, workshops and a creative studio – became a laboratory for the city’s future. “It was a huge challenge,” admits City of Ghent Policy Participation Officer and REFILL Local Coordinator Emma Tytgadt, “but a huge success, and this is because of the group of stakeholders [URBACT Local Group] that was already formed.”

“It was a huge challenge, but a huge success, and this is because of the group of stakeholders [URBACT Local Group] that was already formed.”

Emma Tytgadt

Ghent also improved communication and promotion of temporary use projects – which are shown in a digital map on the City of Ghent website. A university study provided a framework for assessing the impacts of temporary use, which the city now hopes to implement. And what started as the REFILL local group will continue as a temporary use learning network, backed by the city’s Policy Participation Service, of which the neighbourhood managers are part.

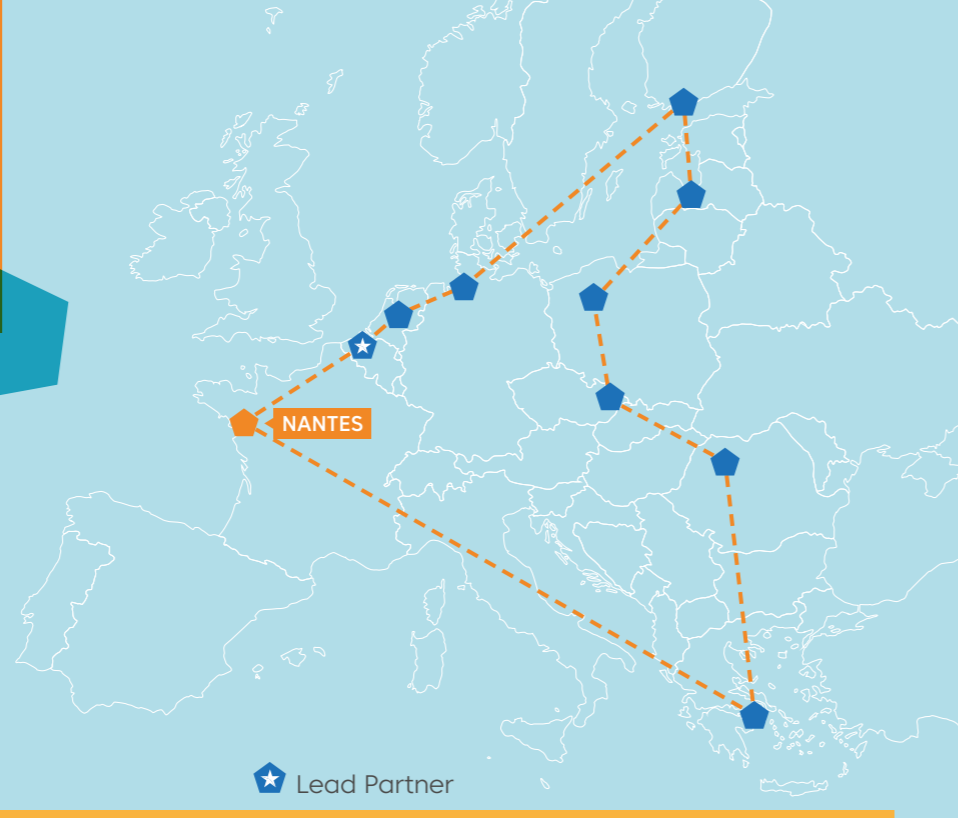


NEST: a sense of creative community

SLEEPING BEAUTY WAKES UP

Key information

- Location: **Nantes (France)**
- Population: **303 382**
- Involved in URBACT network: **REFILL**
- More information: <http://www.urbact.eu/Refill>



Nantes has harnessed temporary use to revitalise urban space and test out future development. With the help of URBACT, citizens are now creatively involved in shaping that future.

Located on the Loire river in north-west France, Nantes was a thriving industrial port city before 20th-century deindustrialisation led to widespread unemployment and economic stagnation. In the 1980s, Nantes was known as 'une belle endormie', or Sleeping Beauty.

Since then the city has undergone large-scale cultural regeneration and economic revival. Nantes has gained international attention for its innovative approach to post-industrial urban development, with temporary use as a key driver. As part of the URBACT REFILL network, Nantes shared its successful strategies with nine partner cities, and in turn enhanced public involvement in shaping its own future.

◆ An island of opportunity

A 4.9 km long island in the centre of the city, Île de Nantes was a shipping industry hub before the shipyards closed in 1987, rendering most of it derelict brownfield land. In 1989 – despite developers' ambitions to build profitable projects – the newly elected mayor at that time, Jean-Marc Ayrault, put a stop to all planning and demanded a rethink of the island.

Mayor Ayrault committed to testing out solutions through temporary use. In 2003, the city created a development company, SAMOA, which could buy land, rezone and resell it with pre-determined conditions, to transform the island along public interests. In 2008, while the island undergoes

gradual redevelopment, SAMOA has retained three large former industrial halls to use as temporary, affordable office spaces for Nantes' entrepreneurs and small companies working in the creative, cultural or charitable industries. In total, the buildings house 180 companies – it's known as a hotel for start-ups – and the ten-year project has proved so successful there is a waiting list.

Île de Nantes is now one of Europe's largest urban regeneration sites. Its temporary uses have made it a hub for creative industries and diversified Nantes' economy. The island serves as a laboratory for urban redevelopment, home to street art companies, design laboratories, co-



The Ilotopia hub



Ilotopia's citizens engagement walk

working spaces, bars, galleries, and a theatre. Some of the space is programmed without any defined use, building in a flexibility that allows the city to be nimble and responsive. Following the cultural and economic success of these short-term initiatives on the island, SAMOA is now planning to incorporate temporary use strategies as part of the island's longer-term development plans – proving that 'meanwhile' use doesn't need to end when redevelopment starts.

◆ Ilotopia

"The REFILL project helped Nantes organise a local working group of stakeholders that had not successfully been brought together before," explains Lucie Renou, SAMOA International Project Manager. The formation of this URBACT Local Group – consisting of city officials, urban planners and community members – helped create a new citizen participation project on Île de Nantes: Ilotopia.

Based in an old garage, Ilotopia is a three-year project working with citizens to shape public space collaboratively

on the island. With the help of creative participation and conversation tools – such as buses transformed into mobile workshop rooms – citizens discuss urban transformation and co-produce projects, which are temporarily tried out in public spaces before they are integrated in the final development plan. As described in its URBACT Integrated Action Plan, Nantes is looking to expand the Ilotopia experiment and develop a long-term mechanism for citizen participation in urban change.

For Ms Renou, international collaboration through REFILL had a hugely positive impact on Nantes. "I'm happy to say that trustful relationships emerged between partners and facilitated the exchange of best practice," she says. "The comparison and communication allowed SAMOA to rethink its local project with the points of view expressed by the REFILL partners. It allowed SAMOA to reflect on temporary use and better evaluate its impact, as well as work in a more integrated way with the city stakeholders. URBACT allowed the local project to have more ambition."

"I'm happy to say that trustful relationships emerged between partners and facilitated the exchange of best practice."

Lucie Renou



Participation at Ilotopia



Partner cities visiting Nantes

AN OLD FORTRESS BRINGS NEW COHESION

Key information

- Location: **Cartagena (Spain)**
- Population: **218 210**
Los Mateos district: 3 000
- Involved in URBACT network: **MAPS**
- More information:
<http://www.urbact.eu/maps>



Cartagena has been a major naval port on Spain's south-eastern coast for hundreds of years. After declining port activity sparked social and economic depression in the 1980s and '90s, Cartagena bounced back with a new local industry: cultural tourism. The city adopted an ambitious plan to enhance local heritage, entitled *Cartagena Puerto de Culturas (2001-2017)*.

"Everything learned from the URBACT approach has been new for the city of Cartagena, and useful for developing our vision for the Integrated Action Plan"

María Peñalver

Today, locals and tourists – many arriving on cruise ships – enjoy Cartagena's waterfront and Art Nouveau architecture, as well as archaeological sites, from a Phoenician shipwreck to a huge Roman theatre.

But few visitors venture into the more run-down areas. Cartagena joined the URBACT MAPS network while facing increasing social and economic fragmentation. The city wanted fresh ideas to boost year-round tourism – while becoming more collaborative, inclusive and resilient, with the benefits of tourism reaching even the poorest neighbourhoods.

One such district is Los Mateos, which sits below the abandoned 18th-century fortress Castillo de los Moros. Here, 21% of adults are illiterate, and 24% are unemployed. "As an inhabitant of Cartagena, Los Mateos was a 'forbidden' neighbourhood... considered dangerous and insecure. I remember my first visit – for the MAPS project – as a tense moment... I looked around with distrust," says

María Peñalver, Professor at the Polytechnic University of Cartagena. When they joined the network, the city set up a group of local stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to reflect and act on the use of the abandoned fortress while revitalising the district. Acting as a coordinator of this group, Ms Peñalver soon discovered many people in Los Mateos were enthusiastic about improving their own neighbourhood. "They had determination to change things, generosity... I decided to collaborate with them as much as possible and accompany them in this challenge until the end," she recalls.

Working with residents and stakeholders – including presidents of local associations, and council representatives – Ms Peñalver helped the local group produce an Integrated Action Plan in line with the city's strategic objectives. Dubbed 'Re-starting from heritage', it defines:

- actions to improve social cohesion and inclusion in Los Mateos district. These include sport and painting competitions and a botanic garden around the fortress with the involvement of citizens and students of the district;
- reusing the Los Moros fort to increase Cartagena's cultural offer. Actions include guided touristic and sport tours;

- an urban planning reference model based on a participatory approach, to use in other marginalised areas. Actions also include a cleaning campaign at the fortress with the involvement of inhabitants, transformation of three empty urban plots into public spaces.

"The Integrated Action Plan is crucial, because for the first time in history Los Mateos district has an integrated project to work together in the same direction for a better future," says Francisco Sáez, Municipal Urban Technical Advisor.

Visible changes

After a workshop in Espinho (PT) with MAPS partner cities, Cartagena developed its own urban governance model – now featured in the integrated plan for use across the city. This set of mechanisms link the municipality with local stakeholders and inhabitants, creating a platform for actions to improve the city. The local group tested the model on designing and implementing mock-up projects involving inhabitants in regeneration efforts in and around the Los Moros fortress.

You can already see results: Los Moros hill is a new green area for the city, with new accesses to the fortress; colourful facades decorate the streets; attractive public areas have replaced empty urban plots. Los Mateos is a place to visit.

Above all, says Ms Peñalver, MAPS showed Cartagena "a new way to improve the urban quality of neglected areas, placing the inhabitants as the epicentre of change".

Without MAPS, she believes decision-makers and citizens would still be ignoring Los Mateos, underestimating the castle's potential to boost integrated urban regeneration – and the benefits of working collaboratively. Los Mateos' inhabitants would be unaware of their own potential to improve their quality of life, given the necessary support.

"Everything learned from the URBACT approach has been new for the city of Cartagena, and useful for developing our vision for the Integrated Action Plan," Ms Peñalver explains.



"3 December 2017 was a special day: Young people, families, inhabitants, local authorities, all participated in a new, big public event. They planted different species of plants and native trees, transforming

one of the slopes into a place that will soon become the Los Moros castle botanic garden. We consider this act as a re-foundation for the castle as a heritage site, and for the Los Mateos district."

María Peñalver

Political backing

The mayor Ana Belén Castejón supports the Integrated Action Plan, encouraging all political parties to approve it at an upcoming council Plenary Session. Next, Cartagena hopes to apply for a new URBACT call to focus on Los Mateos' regeneration.



Hundreds of people help plant trees on the fortress slopes



Francisco Sáez shares six MAPS highpoints

OCT. 2016

MAPS first transnational meeting (Cartagena) has great impact on the city, bringing a real dimension to the URBACT network.

2016

URBACT Local Group meetings set the actions to guide the focus and development of our Integrated Action Plan.

APR. 2016

Thousands of runners enter Los Moros in the famous Ruta de Las Fortalezas. Further actions to attract Cartagena's citizens include: creating a Los Mateos logo; and a public survey to know people's needs and priorities.

JAN. 2017

MAPS second transnational meeting, Koblenz (DE). With our partner cities, we imagine a positive future image for Los Mateos, and define how Los Moros fort can help achieve it.

2017

- Clean-up campaigns in and around the fortress, with volunteers, inhabitants, university students, and City Council support;
- Primary school painting contest;
- Tree-planting around the school and on the fortress hillside, recreating the historical botanic garden.

THROUGHOUT: Cartagena university students and teachers visits develop urban planning solutions for the area.

FROM DERELICT MILITARY SITE TO NEW GREEN CENTRE

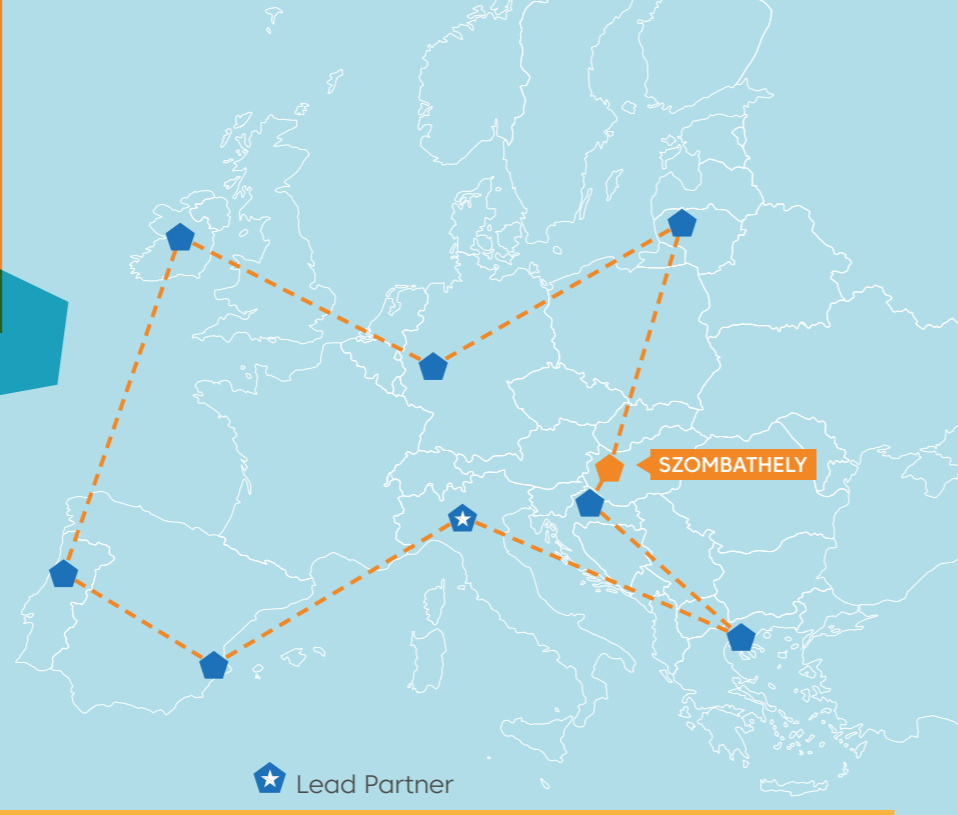
Key information

Location: **Szombathely (Hungary)**

Population: **79 000**

Involved in URBACT network: **MAPS**

More information:
<http://www.urbact.eu/maps>



★ Lead Partner

Despite decades of redevelopment attempts, Szombathely's former military barracks are mostly closed and the buildings deteriorating. The URBACT MAPS network sparked fresh ideas, clear decisions and locally-sourced solutions for transforming the site into a green, multi-functional city sub-centre.

◆ A big empty space in the city

Szombathely, Hungary's tenth largest city, sits near the borders of Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Slovakia. Within the city centre is a closed-off, 21-hectare site: the former Hussar Barracks with old military housing, stables, hospital, kitchens and warehouses.

Built for the eleventh Hussar regiment in 1889, the site has fallen into disrepair since it was abandoned by Soviet troops in 1990. Only the main building has been renovated for use by cultural and educational NGOs, thanks to the local Apáczai Csere János Foundation.

Unfortunately, national heritage status granted in 2001 to protect the land and buildings from large commercial developments has made any renewal efforts more complicated. Meanwhile the city, sole owners of the site since 2006, faces heavy maintenance costs.

Searching for solutions, Ágnes Györffy, Project Manager for the Mayor's Office, discovered URBACT. Soon after, in 2015, Szombathely joined the MAPS network with other nine EU cities all building sustainable urban strategies to "redefine the function, social role and accessibility of former military heritage".

◆ Ideas for turning the barracks into an organic part of the city

URBACT's methodology and expertise was groundbreaking for Szombathely. At the heart of this was the creation of group of local stakeholders, an URBACT Local Group, focused on reusing the Hussar Barracks. It included residents, urban experts, historians, municipality staff, local businesses, and the Apáczai Csere János Foundation.

The URBACT Local Group made the key decision to open the barracks temporarily to pedestrians and cyclists to raise awareness of the site and its hidden potentials. To enable this, it formed a technical group that analysed costs and presented a detailed proposal to the vice-mayor. With his backing, the URBACT Local Group refined their plans.



"If we hadn't joined MAPS... I think we'd still be searching for one big aim, one big new reuse of the whole territory."

Ágnes Györffy

Szombathely organised open days and guided tours, engaging hundreds of residents. This generated numerous ideas for the site, including housing government offices and hosting large thematic fairs. One entrepreneur proposed to refurbish a partially renovated venue to provide studios for rock and jazz bands.

In 2017, after years of requests culminating in a letter from the mayor, the heritage status was finally lifted from certain buildings. This paved the way for the municipality to demolish the worst of the ruins, and fund renovations by selling plots for housing. "The burden was taken away," says Ms Györffy.

The URBACT Local Group set to work on finalising its Integrated Action Plan for the site. It envisages repurposing buildings to host community events, creative co-working spaces, an incubator for local organisations, offices and a history museum. Outside installations will include an open-air stage, outdoor market for local produce and hussar-themed playground. There will be a central park and residential area, along with sports facilities, community gardens, and routes for walking and cycling.

Thanks to MAPS, Szombathely now has a clear vision for renovating the Hussar Barracks over seven years. If approved by the City Council in late 2018, the plans will breathe life into the area, creating a new, green sub-centre for the city.

◆ Success factors

The URBACT Local Group and its newly appointed manager, Tibor Polgár, of West Pannon's Regional Development Agency, benefited from URBACT tools and methods. Mr Polgár found the Stakeholders Analysis method particularly valuable in identifying key stakeholders and their linkages.



Hussar Barracks Open Day, May 2017

He continues to use it in other community-based planning projects.

MAPS Lead Expert, Luca Lanzoni, encouraged the city to explore realistic permanent – and temporary – uses and to develop these in a process of circular co-design. This meant the URBACT Local Group testing ideas, reviewing them with experts and the other eight MAPS partner cities and feeding the best ones into their plan.

Focusing on temporary use helped the flow of ideas and pointed towards a new multi-functional vision for the former barracks.

"If we hadn't joined MAPS... I think we'd still be searching for one big aim, one big new reuse of the whole territory. And instead, the area must be split up, and different uses must appear. I think we're now sure in the municipality that we've had the wrong approach over the past more than 20 years," says Ms Györffy.

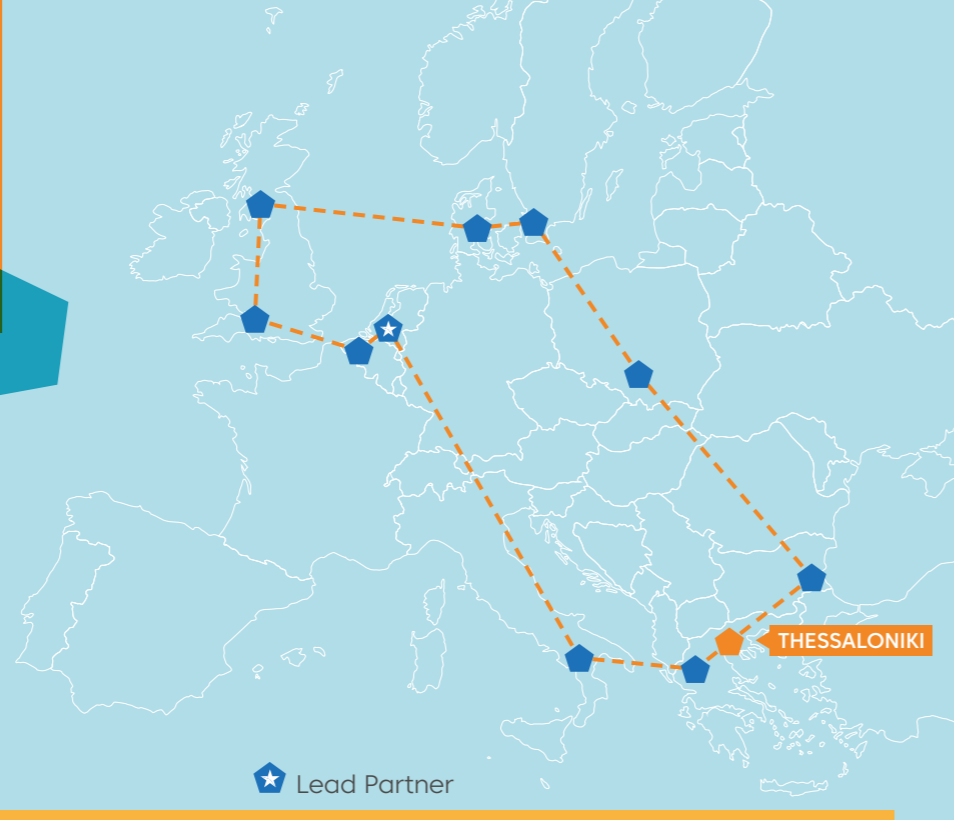


Szombathely adopted a new participatory approach

LOCAL DRIVE FOR A CYCLE-FRIENDLY CITY

Key information

- Location: **Thessaloniki (Greece)**
- Population: **315 196**
- Involved in URBACT network: **RESILIENT EUROPE**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/resilient-europe>



Facing severe pollution from over-reliance on cars, Thessaloniki committed to promoting cycling proactively, and, through the URBACT RESILIENT EUROPE network, drew up its first-ever strategy framework to increase cycling in the city.

As Greece's second largest city, Thessaloniki has experienced a concentration of the challenges facing the country: a financial crisis reducing service resources; severe air pollution from a dependence on cars; poorly maintained mobility infrastructure; and a climate of mistrust between civil society and local government.

The Municipality of Thessaloniki recognised that its previous responses to urban problems had not included citizen input. By participating in RESILIENT EUROPE, Thessaloniki wanted to learn from partner cities how to implement a more open approach of developing local strategies and plans in collaboration with citizens, and in turn build better trust in local government.

The city decided to focus its work on developing a collaborative action plan for promoting and improving cycling in the city, which had been suffering from low citizen engagement as well as inefficient, poorly maintained infrastructure. In its Sustainable Energy Action Plan, Thessaloniki had already determined to decrease CO₂ emissions by 20% from 2011 to 2020, but it needed more support to engage citizens in the process and promote cycling as a viable travel mode.

◆ An action plan: mobilising the community to travel safely

Thessaloniki hoped the URBACT network would improve collaboration between urban actors. Creating an URBACT Local Group helped by bringing a variety of stakeholders together to work on promoting cycling, while improving local air quality and residents' health. The URBACT Local Group consisted of a mix of people from the city's department of sustainable mobility, alongside local agencies like the Metropolitan Development Agency and NGOs, including cycling clubs.

To test out new approaches and work towards the creation of an Integrated Action Plan, the group undertook an experiment in the area of Toumba in eastern Thessaloniki, focused on co-creating new solutions with citizens to increase bicycle use.

The group organised a public event in May 2017 called 'I move in my city with safety', inviting local residents to hear about how cities around the world had encouraged cycling, as well as understand more about the URBACT network. A questionnaire collected citizen feedback on the challenges of cycling locally, and suggestions for improvement. The feedback showed that local residents desired more bicycle

"I think the most important thing we gained from our participation in the RESILIENT EUROPE network was the methodology of participatory action planning."

Andreas Karadakis

In June 2017, the local group organised two family-friendly, community cycle events to help promote cycling. The cycle routes passed through quiet streets and connected various schools, to help citizens realise that, even without bicycle infrastructure, there existed safer streets that could enable daily bike commuting. Participants in the cycle event agreed the route was safe for cycling and felt that the event's in-situ experiential bike training and road safety lessons were very useful.

Following the community events, the local group formulated an 'Integrated Action Plan to promote cycling and improve the resilience of society and the city of Thessaloniki'. It proposed measures such as: introducing a compulsory education course in cycling; implementing awareness and motivation campaigns to promote cycling; creating cycle parking lots near businesses; and encouraging a cycle-to-work campaign.

infrastructure – including bike lanes and cycle parking facilities – as well as better road safety, traffic calming measures, free cycling and traffic safety courses, and an expansion of the existing bike-share system. The URBACT Local Group included these suggestions into the Integrated Action Plan for the city.

◆ Constructing a positive legacy

After the project, the municipality applied lessons learnt from the RESILIENT EUROPE network and submitted a proposal for regional funding. It was successful – and Thessaloniki received funding to expand the current bike lane network and renovate a portion of the existing one. "We believe that the participation of the municipality in the RESILIENT EUROPE network had a significant role in the success of our proposal," says Georgios Papastergios, Operational Planning Officer at the Municipality of Thessaloniki.

Andreas Karadakis, Finance and Project Manager for the municipality, elaborates on how the URBACT programme benefitted Thessaloniki: "I think the most important thing we gained from our participation in the RESILIENT EUROPE network was the methodology of participatory action planning. It's really important to transfer this know-how to other municipal services. The interesting element of the network was the pillar of resilience that brought together cities facing different challenges. Municipal services that worked in different fields came into contact, and this interdisciplinarity was a source of inspiration for the service of our municipality."

Thessaloniki had never before implemented a concrete framework of strategies for the promotion of cycling, and the very procedure of creating an Integrated Action Plan was a new methodology for the city. Building on this successful first experience, the municipality hopes to apply the same methodology in future projects around the city.

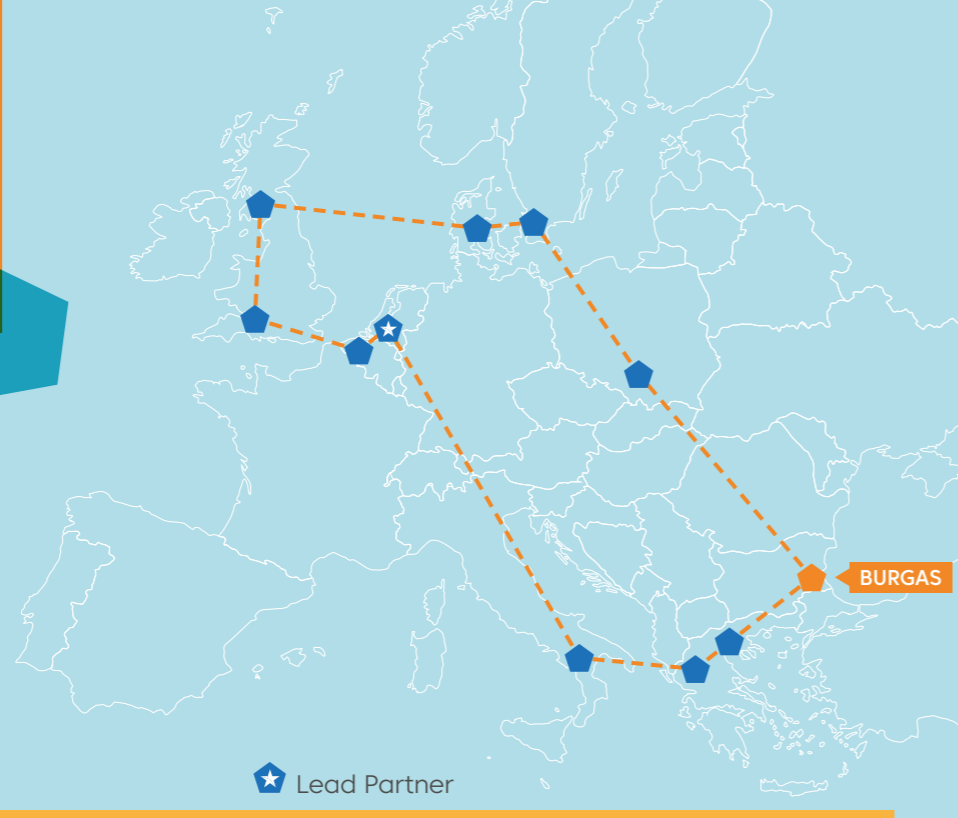


Pupils advocating for the right to biking, skating and walking in the city

TREE-PLANTING BOOSTS URBAN RESILIENCE AND ENGAGEMENT

Key information

- Location: **Burgas (Bulgaria)**
- Population: **211 033**
- Involved in URBACT network: **RESILIENT EUROPE**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/resilient-europe>



To help mitigate the impacts of serious floods, the city of Burgas piloted new, successful forms of citizen engagement — and, armed with a supply of trees, built support for improving urban resilience in a collaborative way.



Elderly and young acting together

Burgas, Bulgaria's fourth-largest city, is situated on the Black Sea coast and is home to a large complex of salt lakes. All this water makes the city particularly vulnerable to flooding. In recent years, Burgas has been hit by severe floods, while also struggling with ageing infrastructure and a lack of preparedness for times of crisis. Before joining the URBACT RESILIENT EUROPE network, public participation and trust in local government were low and resources for testing solutions were limited.

An introduction to resilience

By joining RESILIENT EUROPE, Burgas wanted to become a more resilient city in light of its vulnerability to flooding. Once

in the network, the city set up a group of local stakeholders, an URBACT Local Group, to produce an Integrated Action Plan around resilience. This word was a new concept for many of the local stakeholders gathered at the first group's meeting, but was immediately embraced as a valuable cross-sector framework for tackling environmental problems and enhancing the city's strength. It also provided an opportunity to think in new ways, looking towards citizen-engaged, 'softer' approaches rather than simply relying on large-scale infrastructural changes.

Neighbourhood testing ground

Burgas' URBACT Local Group included policy officers from various city departments, along with NGOs and local businesses. Having discussed the city's major climatic stresses and how best to engage residents in positive change, the group proposed the area of Dolno Ezerovo as a test site for strengthening urban resilience in a collaborative way.

Just west of Burgas city centre, near the Vaya Lake, Dolno Ezerovo has experienced destructive flooding in recent years due to high levels of rainfall and runoff. Most of the neighbourhood is below sea level, and its drainage infrastructure is ageing. The URBACT Local Group designed a pilot programme that would launch local efforts to increase flooding resilience through nature-based and citizen-engaged solutions. This involved planting flood-

"Burgas did excellent work by involving the citizens that before were very sceptical and even suspicious of the city officers."

Niki Frantzeskaki

mitigating trees, as well as strengthening collaboration between the municipality and community to help tackle urban resilience issues better in future. Burgas had struggled with citizen engagement previously, and some residents mistrusted the municipality. So the URBACT Local Group appointed the head of the local centre for administrative services to act as mediator between the municipality and Dolno Ezerovo residents. Members of the city government also went door-to-door around the area, talking to citizens about the pilot project and development of an integrated plan for future actions. School teachers taught local children about the importance of urban resilience. Residents were then invited to a meeting to decide where to plant the trees — thus giving the community a say in improving their neighbourhood's resilience to flooding.

Planting a future

The URBACT Local Group organised a community event to plant five willow trees in Dolno Ezerovo's central square — a pleasant public space before flooding caused it to become waterlogged. At the popular event, where residents helped plant trees, the municipality also received community input on their Integrated Action Plan. Residents were enthusiastic about the chance to share their opinions and ideas; those who remembered the area's deforestation 20 years earlier blamed increased local flooding on the lack of trees, and agreed that reforestation would help mitigate flood impact.

Collaborating with citizens of all ages, 35 more trees were planted at places in the neighbourhood identified as most vulnerable to flooding. The trees were selected to survive in wet environments and withstand future floods. Although relatively small-scale, the tree-planting helped demonstrate

what could be achieved with low-cost green measures — and strengthened public support for the plan.

The URBACT Local Group continued to work alongside residents to develop the integrated plan, which proposes a range of tools to mitigate flooding in the neighbourhood, including: training courses on flood preparedness and resilience for citizens; tutor sessions on environmental resilience for school children; construction of detention basins to store rainwater; better maintenance of drainage infrastructure; establishment of warning systems; replacement of non-perennial with perennial plants; maintaining active communication between citizens and municipality, online and face-to-face. It's hoped these tools will inspire similar actions across the whole city.

URBACT impact: a more engaged community

Through the RESILIENT EUROPE network, the city of Burgas learned new ways to involve citizens in shaping plans, understood the value of engaging the community in urban resilience and massively increased stakeholder participation in municipal activity. Citizens, meanwhile, regained trust in the municipality through their involvement in creating the integrated plan — and built awareness of measures that can be taken to improve flooding resilience.

"Burgas did excellent work by involving the citizens that before were very sceptical and even suspicious of the city officers," explains the Lead Expert of the network, Niki Frantzeskaki. Georgi Sakaliev of Burgas' Territorial Cooperation Department adds: "The URBACT programme was a great opportunity for the city of Burgas to become a partner in a network that enriched the horizons of the city experts when it comes to urban adaptation and strengthened the city's capacity in dealing with climate change." The city now hopes to build on their RESILIENT EUROPE experience and secure resources to implement the integrated action plan.



Dolno Ezerovo residents plant flood-mitigating trees in their neighbourhood



HOW TO ADAPT PUBLIC PROCUREMENT TO LOCAL NEEDS, USERS AND INVESTORS

Key information

- Location: **Preston (United Kingdom)**
- Population: **140 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **Procure**
- More information: <http://www.urbact.eu/procure>



When Preston's economy hit the rocks in 2011, the City Council turned to experiments in community wealth building. Buoyed by the success of these innovations to keep resources in the area they joined the URBACT Procure network to further refine their model and help spread the word.

Since the 1980s Preston has faced similar problems to many other parts of northern England. Once a major manufacturing centre, when the factories closed the city found itself in a difficult situation. Despite growth in its valuable service sector, Preston looked to fund further development mainly through external investment, particularly in the commercial and retail sectors.

Then, in 2011, a breaking point came. After more than a decade of planning, a GBP 700 million (about EUR 780 million) project to build a new shopping centre in the city centre fell apart. 'Tithebarn', as it was known, was supposed to save the struggling community by providing jobs and services. Due to the banking crisis, however, investors lost confidence in the scheme. Finally when one of the major partners, the retailer John Lewis, pulled out, the City Council had little choice but to shelve the initiative. Things looked apocalyptic, "we really had no plan B," says Councillor Matthew Brown, "and needed to find a solution, a way to be more resilient."

More than a traditional approach

After months of searching, the municipality found their answer in the field of community wealth building – a set of strategies designed to unlock latent growth from within local economies. A dedicated Preston Procurement Practitioners Group was established whose job was to understand how

money was spent within the city using an innovative spend analysis tool. Most importantly it worked to establish how local anchor institutions – such as universities, hospitals, business and housing organisations – could allocate resources in a more strategic way to support communities, where appropriate. Thanks to this tactical procurement strategy, more funds were subsequently spent in the city.

By 2015 the benefits of the so-called Preston model were already being celebrated. Yet it was recognised more could be done. This was one of the reasons the city decided to



Winckley Square Gardens, a recently restored green space, near Preston's high street



Fishergate, one of Preston's main shopping streets

participate in the URBACT Procure network. "It gave us an impetus to continue and an opportunity to expand by including other organisations in our team like the Federation of Small Businesses and Chamber of Commerce," says Tamar Reay, Economic Regeneration Officer for Preston City Council.

"The programme has really legitimated what we're doing by valorising it internationally."

Matthew Brown

The city created a group of local stakeholders, an URBACT Local Group to produce an integrated plan on how to link procurement more effectively to local needs, and how to establish a more collaborative approach with the anchor institutions.

Participation in Procure opened the city practitioners' eyes to innovations in other European cities, complementing their own ethos of community wealth building. From Prague (CZ) they learnt more about how to include social and environmental criteria in their procurement process. From Candelaria (ES) they studied the possible benefits and



Preston's city centre

challenges of participatory budgets. From Satu Mare (RO) they shared strategies for how to work more effectively with local businesses. In all three cases, Preston is exploring how practices learnt from Procure partner cities can be integrated into the municipality's future plans for the city.

Just as importantly, the URBACT network was an opportunity for Preston to raise awareness about its own successful innovations in community wealth building. "The programme has really legitimated what we're doing by valorising it internationally," confirms Matthew Brown. Preston's spend analysis work was recognised as an URBACT Good Practice in 2017, and received a warm reception from hundreds of urban practitioners at the URBACT City Festival in Tallinn (EE) that same year. As a result of its work through Procure, Preston has also become a partner in the EU Urban Agenda Partnership for Innovative and Responsible Public Procurement. This group links urban authorities directly with national governments, observers, and the European Commission.

Sharing the know-how

Across the UK, the Preston model is being wielded as a symbol of resilience, and by some as a prototype for a national alternative to austerity. At the local level, though, the journey is just beginning. The City Council is now working to pioneer further community wealth schemes, based on examples from URBACT Procure network partner cities as well as post-industrial communities in America. Those currently underway include an effort to stimulate the creation of workers cooperatives and form a fully licenced community bank.

The Integrated Action Plan, meanwhile, will not just stay on the shelf. "The aim is to continue that work," reflects Ms Tamar. "We want to make a handbook on procurement. Something which explains what we're looking for from a

buyer's side, as well as a tendering guide for suppliers." As these next steps take shape, an even more immediate legacy endures in the bonds among the URBACT Local Group, "that space is not just going away," insists Ms Tamar. "The anchor institutions will continue to meet and are all interested to continue the Spend Analysis work. We've even agreed to collaborate again in future projects."

RE-THINKING PROCUREMENT AS A PUBLIC GOOD

Key information

- Location: **Prague 9 district (Czech Republic)**
- Population: **55 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **Procure**
- More information: <http://www.urbact.eu/procure>



In Czech Republic, municipal contracts are often associated with fraud and incompetence. Prague's district 9 is building a more transparent and effective procurement process using good practices from URBACT cities.

Prague 9 is an ex-industrial district in the north-east of the Czech capital. Positioned between the centre and suburbs with good transport links and ample green space, it has become a target zone for regeneration. While the neighbourhood is still characterised by abandoned factories, tenement buildings and other brownfield sites, change is underway. Parks are being revitalised, new public buildings opened and NGOs and private enterprises have started moving to the area.

For residents, though, the role of local government in all this is viewed with suspicion. "There's a mistrust around public contracts," says Pavel Pospíšek, EU Project manager for Prague 9 City Council. "Procurement is very suspicious to people, who often perceive it as a mysterious thing linked to fraud." In addition, "Often a candidate wins and isn't able to finish on budget," reports Mr Pospíšek. "Then they have to adjust the bid and the municipality ends up paying even more."

Tracking spend

In 2016, new European legislation was introduced to loosen up the procurement criteria and provide new means for calculating the value of a proposed initiative. The idea was to provide a legal framework for evaluating environmental and social questions, as factors to be considered alongside price. It was also designed to improve the public perception of procurement more generally.

"We knew there was a possibility to innovate but we did not actually know what to do," recalls Mr Pospíšek. "That was one of the main reasons we turned to the Procure network." To start with, the city set up a group of local stakeholders, an URBACT Local Group, comprising members of the municipality, tendering organisations and small entrepreneurs, with the specific objective of implementing new policies, though at that point the district had no preliminary analyses in place. "This was an opportunity to exchange practical knowledge," says Zdeněk Davídek, a city councillor and coordinator of the local group. "I would never have guessed how advanced some other partners were in innovating with procurement."

One project that proved immediately useful was the URBACT Good Practice 'Progressing procurement practice through



A meeting of the Prague 9 URBACT Local Group



The Prague 9 team presentation to the network partners

spend analysis', originally pioneered in Preston (UK). The Prague team encountered it for the first time at a thematic meeting in Nagykovács (HU) when it was presented as a case study. "We weren't just inspired," says Mr Pospíšek, "we decided to do our own version." A full analysis takes five years, but after just two the benefits are already being felt. "The data isn't complete but it already gives a view of what's going on. We have a better picture of where funds are working and where they are being wasted," says Mr Pospíšek. Before joining URBACT, Prague 9 had no overall view of total procurement expenditure. Now they are able to map precisely where local funds end up geographically and what service providers use them most efficiently.

"We weren't just inspired, we decided to do our own version."

Pavel Pospíšek

The most in-depth experiment to emerge from the URBACT Local Group, however, was an attempt to employ environmental criteria in the procurement process. "We learnt how to do this thanks to guidance from the URBACT Lead Expert,"

says Mr Pospíšek. After studying European legislation together with the Procure cities, the Prague 9 town hall produced a tender relating to the purchase of computing equipment for a school IT lab. The environmental criteria specified guidelines for the consumption of energy and lifespan of the delivered goods. "In the end the winning bid remained the lowest price bidder," reflects Mr Pospíšek. "The result wasn't what we hoped for, but the criteria was implemented. We learnt how to do it, tried it out and want to take it further."

A new tendering process

In order to consolidate their experiences, the URBACT Local Group developed a handbook for people who work in procurement, drawing on their lessons from the URBACT Procure network and their specific experience of implementing new criteria. "We wanted to produce a step by step manual in Czech and in English," says Mr Pospíšek, "something for us to look back on but also to provide a guide for people who might want to do this in their own cities, in URBACT but also beyond."

As Prague 9 wait to evaluate the ongoing spend analysis, plans are in place to increase the number of tenders that include environmental and social criteria. The URBACT Local Group agrees that these first steps have already improved the quality of procurement. Councillor Zdeněk Davídek in particular is confident that benefits from the Procure network will become even more apparent in the coming years. "Generally, we face similar or even the same problems and issues as ever," he reflects, "but what we've now learnt is that there are many new ways we can handle them."

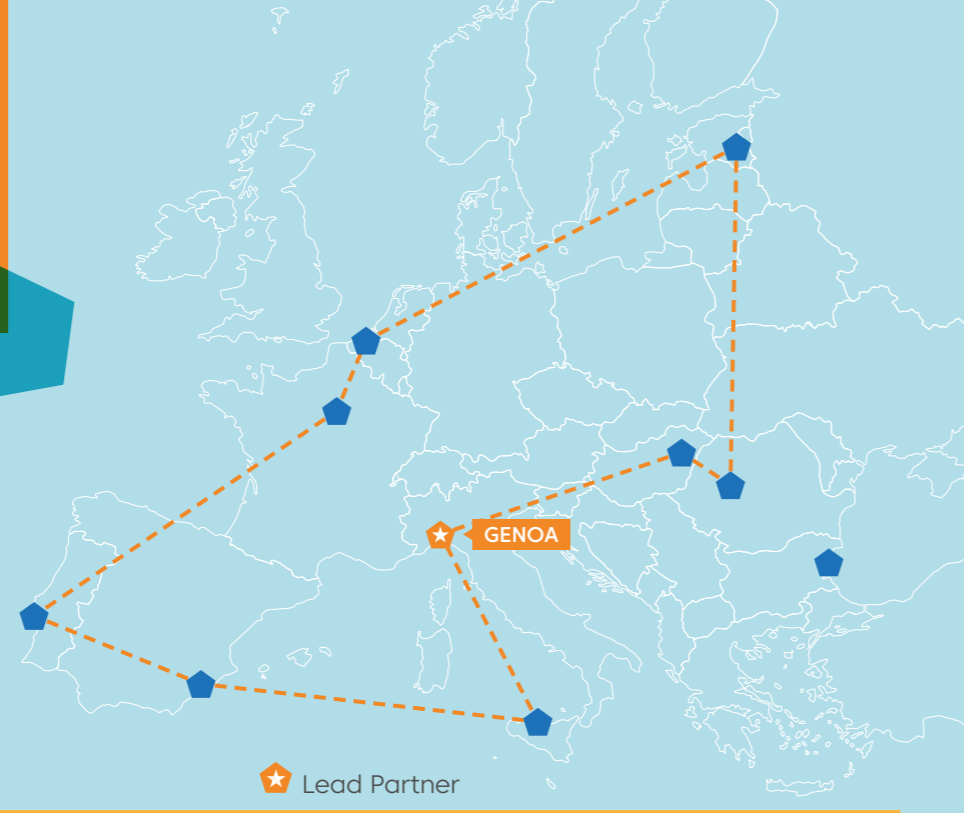


The Prague 9 Town Hall

USING SOCIAL MEDIA FOR CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT

Key information

- 📍 Location: **Genoa (Italy)**
- 👤 Population: **594 700**
- 🏠 Involved in URBACT network: **INTERACTIVE CITIES**
- 📄 More information: <http://urbact.eu/interactive-cities>



★ Lead Partner

Leading the URBACT INTERACTIVE CITIES network, Genoa explored social media to enable citizen participation in promoting the city to tourists, workers and business. This work is now providing a basis to respond to the trauma experienced when Genoa's Morandi Bridge tragically collapsed in August 2018.



Genoa's social media ambassadors

📍 A pioneer in using digital interactive tools

The city of Genoa in northwest Italy has actively sought to use emerging digital technologies to communicate more effectively and bring local people closer to the public administration. This is in the context of a local economy that has moved increasingly from shipyards and steelworks towards tourism, services and technology.

In 2013, Genoa joined the URBACT CityLogo network focusing on improving the city's branding and marketing. In 2016, the city initiated the INTERACTIVE CITIES network, looking to dig deeper into how digital, social media and user-generated content can improve urban management in European cities of whatever size.

The City Council set up and coordinated an URBACT Local Group comprising social media managers of various municipal departments; the local Chamber of Commerce; and private organisations in the city, including museums, the aquarium and the airport. This 'social media group' planned experimental actions covering different aspects of tourism or business promotion.

It also tested initiatives to improve digital services offered to visitors. Notably, it worked with a local digital company to develop an immersive 'Medieval Tour' of the historic centre using 4D and virtual reality experiences. This technology offers the potential to develop and sell more immersive packages, improving the visitor experience and dispersing visitors across city sites.

📍 Promoting a new shared storytelling

As the URBACT Expert Daniela Patti describes, the core of Genoa's activities were to develop "a territorial marketing strategy to which all relevant local stakeholders could

"You don't come to URBACT for the money, but for the method – the fact that the programme makes you work in an integrated way with all the local stakeholders."

Gianluca Saba



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An Instagram competition selected the best photo of Genoa's 'Rolli Palaces'

During the 2017 open days of Genoa's 42 UNESCO World Heritage 'Palazzi dei Rolli', the city gave Genoese bloggers and Instagrammers control of the Municipality's social media accounts. For Rossana Borrioni, Genoa's Social Media Strategist: "[It was a] great experience... due to the 'social ability' of the ambassadors and because... a different point of view is an important moment of exchange between Municipality and citizens."

Another initiative created a three-day #Genova25 'Instatour' of the city to mark 25 years since the major redevelopment of the port and new aquarium. The project invited ten Instagrammers from Italy, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain and Scotland to discover Genoa for three days and share new perspectives on the city.

📍 Building on the lessons learned

The Integrated Action Plan of Genoa seeks to ensure that the digital communication work of the city continues to evolve and build on the tested actions. Crucially, the social media team has continued to work, including developing the new #genovalikesyou campaign as a direct response to the tragedy of the Morandi Bridge collapse.

Future work over the next three to five years will also look to pick up on digital tools from partner cities on aspects that could cover promoting local business, revitalising neighbourhoods and measuring impact. Genoa entered a bilateral exchange with Murcia (ES) to hear about its digital co-creative processes for neighbourhood regeneration, and the two cities launched a follow-up 'Digital Citizenship' working group within Eurocities.

The future development of the digital communication and promotion strategy of the city will be supported by money from the City Tax Management System – an URBACT – identified Good Practice based on a joint strategy between the city and the Chamber of Commerce.

contribute and belong." Key principles were to involve 'influencers', whilst inviting everyone to join online actions.

The URBACT Local Group launched a new campaign called 'Make Genoa a Part of You' to promote the hashtag #genovamorethanthis, which was originally launched with the new city logo in 2014. The city chose three 'social ambassadors' from an active community of Genoese Instagrammers (@IgersGenova) accompanied by a public photo competition which saw 3 612 photos uploaded in five weeks, helping to create a digital, Instagram-oriented map of Genoa.



Gianluca Saba
Head of International Relations,
Genoa Municipality
interview

What was your biggest lesson from INTERACTIVE CITIES?

INTERACTIVE CITIES has been an incredible experience for the City of Genoa. We learned a lot from all the other partners in terms of how to make the most of social media in enhancing and improving the governance in communication between citizens and public administration.

How did URBACT methods or tools help Genoa?

You don't come to URBACT for the money, but for the method – the fact that the programme makes you work in an integrated way with all the local stakeholders. In the case of Genoa, the result is a new city narrative and a permanent platform for exchange with the citizens. Thanks to this, Genoa has increased its visibility, its image [and] its number of tourists.

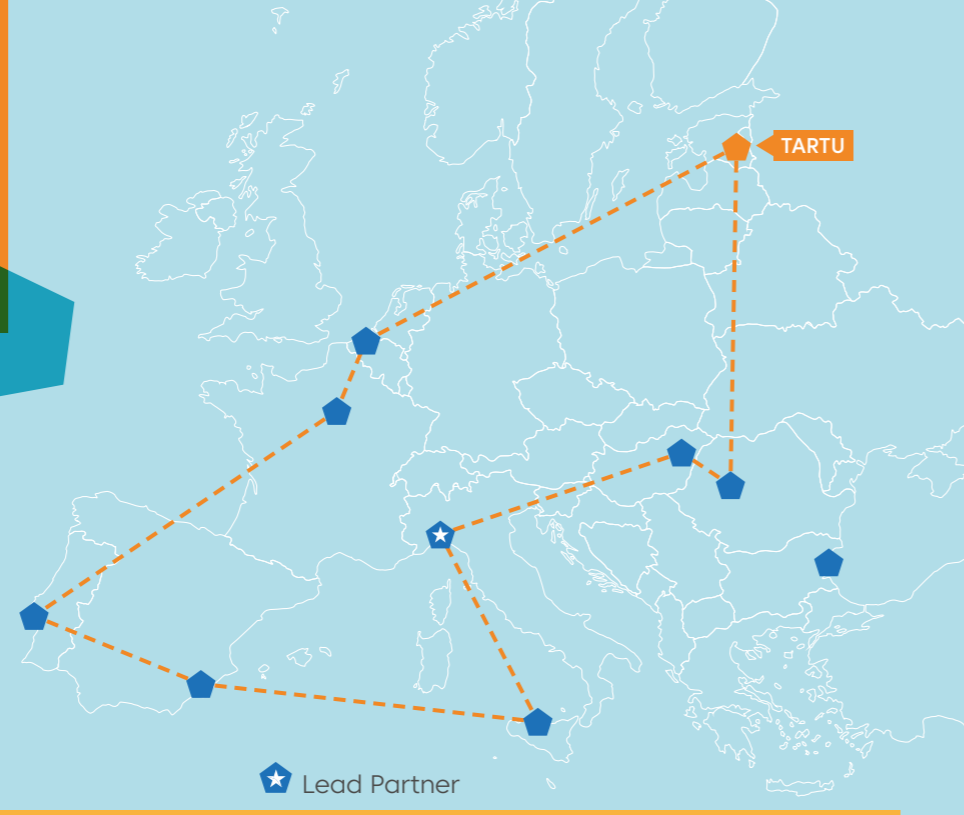
What are Genoa's plans beyond INTERACTIVE CITIES?

Thanks to URBACT, [the] social media team will keep working beyond the project. This group is very focused on the relaunch of the image of the city – because it could be tremendously damaged from the tragedy [of the Morandi bridge collapse] – and to involve the citizens through dedicated hashtags to make them part of the process of recovering after the crisis. Every week there are regular meetings of this team.

INCREASING CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN eGOVERNANCE

Key information

- Location: **Tartu (Estonia)**
- Population: **99 400**
- Involved in URBACT network: **INTERACTIVE CITIES**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/interactive-cities>



Tartu used its participation in the URBACT network INTERACTIVE CITIES to develop and test actions for strengthening citizen participation in urban planning and participatory budgeting, with a particular focus on young people. Its approved Integrated Action Plan is part of an ongoing process of strengthening the city's eGovernance.



Tartu is a pretty university town in eastern Estonia

A strong background in eGovernance

Tartu, Estonia's second largest city, has invested strongly in improving citizen participation through the digitalisation of administrative processes, including an e-government platform and e-voting. Nevertheless, key challenges remained the relatively low participation of young people and the constant and rapid evolution of the sector.

This desire to push further and deeper in issues of eGovernance led Tartu to join the URBACT INTERACTIVE CITIES network. The resulting Integrated Action Plan focuses on practical actions to help city officials use e-tools to: better engage citizens in reorganising urban spaces; improve the participatory budgeting process and outcomes; and mobilise young people to participate more actively in such processes.

Lilian Lukka, Communications Manager in Tartu City Government, explains that by working with youth organisations, NGOs, politicians and city officials in various activities of brainstorming, crowdsourcing and URBACT Local Group meetings "we managed to thoroughly consider our own weak points and set ourselves activities. We would still probably have moved in this direction, although perhaps not as methodically or consistently."

"Collaboration with other cities, learning from their experience and the feedback we got about Tartu's practices [was also] invaluable," highlights Ms Lukka. "There's no question that we got some good ideas and inspiration from the other cities. Some examples that spring to mind are Lisbon's experience of participatory budgeting and Paris' actions that benefited small shops."

Engaging young people in participatory budgeting

Since 2013, Tartu has spent 1% of the city's annual investment budget through participatory budgeting. Citizens can submit their ideas on what could be done in the city, comment on them and eventually vote on them in an online tool (VOLIS). The two ideas that receive the most votes from residents each year are implemented by the city government.

A meeting was held in January 2017 with 16 - 19 year-olds to explore the reasons why this age group accounted for only 3% of those who voted in the process. The main challenges were found to be ones of perception, with young people feeling that such political processes were "complicated", "boring" or that their ideas would never be chosen.

Tartu supported young people to make videos introducing the participatory budget to other young people, including one starring a well-known Estonian stand-up comedian. The videos were distributed in various interactive channels by the young people themselves. There was a resulting increase in ideas submitted by young people and about subjects more closely related to youth.

Testing the idea collection map

Tartu also piloted an 'idea collection map' – a crowdsourcing solution in which people share their proposals – for major investments or minor improvements – with only a few words on a city map. It contrasts strongly with traditional approaches requiring citizens to submit written amendments to lengthy written documents. The process was supported by an ambitious campaign using videos and posters.

Jarno Laur, Tartu's Deputy Mayor for Urban Development and Planning 2013-2017, is enthusiastic about the results: "We had more than 100 ideas collected this way that would normally not be presented... most of their ideas were great... Usually people are against something, but this time it was surprisingly constructive." Suggestions ranged from cycle



The project investigated young people's low engagement with participatory policy-making

paths and playgrounds to the more ambitious establishment of a school and new houseboat infrastructure.

The collection map provides investment ideas to city planners that might not emerge through participatory budgeting – for being too expensive or too locally specific to win a city-wide popular vote. The Tartu experience also suggests that valuable proposals can miss out under participatory budgeting through weaknesses in their marketing campaign.

The digital approach extended to the city's resulting Masterplan. Jarno Laur highlights that a masterplan is usually "something like 240 pages of rather heavy text. But in this version we have different information layers that everybody can switch off or on. For example you can see maps of schools combined with bicycle roads and that makes it easier for citizens to understand what is going on."

Lasting impact

Lilian Lukka highlights that "The [URBACT Local Group] convened within the framework of the project will hereinafter remain a strong cooperation partner to the city." Furthermore, the actions defined by the group have been approved by the city as an Integrated Action Plan which are now being implemented. "All projects and cooperation networks launched during the URBACT project will continue and be further consolidated."

The tested actions have already had positive knock-on effects. Tartu's 2019 Youth Council elections will use the same tool as the participatory budgeting vote. Ms Lukka adds that: "Based on our initial experience we are using the same idea collection process for a number of other projects, such as the planning of locations for Tartu's public bicycle sharing system and the application process for the 2024 European Capital of Culture."

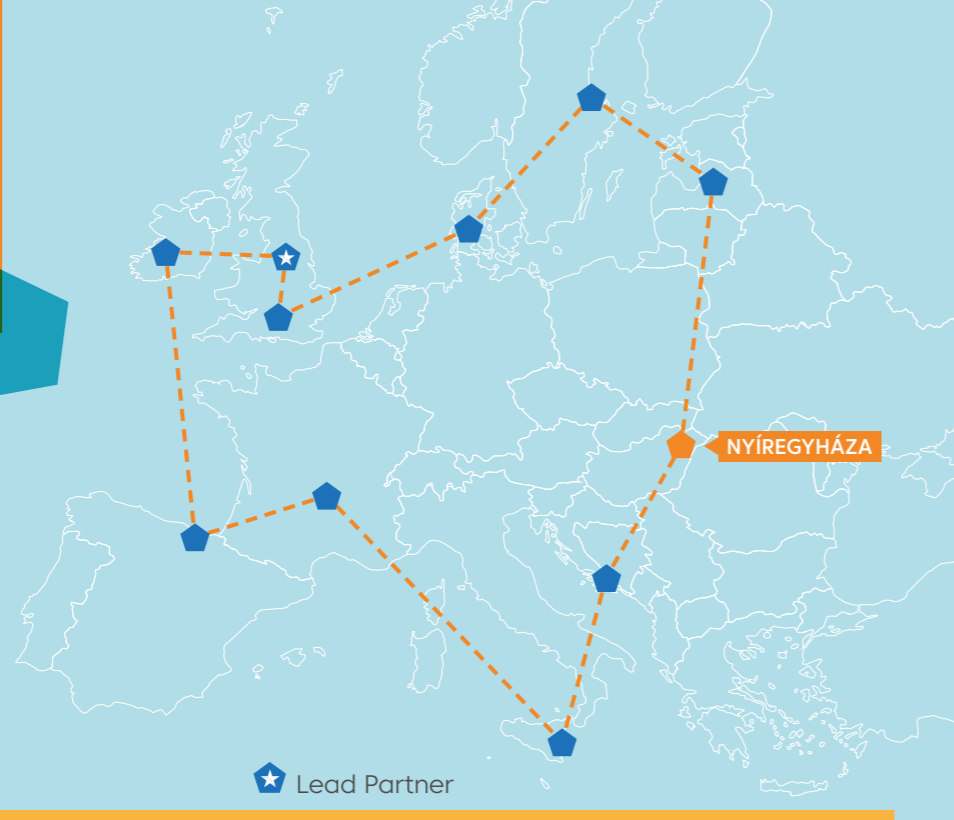
"All projects and cooperation networks launched during the URBACT project will continue and be further consolidated."

Lilian Lukka

WHEN IT COMES TO DIGITAL, IT'S STILL ABOUT THE PEOPLE

Key information

- Location: **Nyíregyháza (Hungary)**
- Population: **118 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **TechTown**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/techtown>



Nyíregyháza by night

“The most important outcome of the URBACT project may be that the issue of digital economy is stabilised on the agenda of the city.”

Béla Kezy

building. It’s not just rental offices but providing a whole bunch of services, it’s the community within the building and the commitment of the local government,” says Mr Kezy.

The town is now pursuing the creation of an incubator at the LOGIN park with clearer plans. The aim is not just to support a few start-ups that deliver Information Technologies

services. As Nyíregyháza and its partners have understood, creating new incubation centres and encouraging digital skills in local government and education is also about a wider change in culture. Alison Partridge, TechTown Lead Expert, says, “Digital is also reshaping traditional

industries, environments and business models. It speeds up the way new products and services are conceived, developed, produced and accessed.” While the growth of digital economy opens huge potentials, the risk for a city of dropping behind in this race is just as huge.

“The most important outcome of the URBACT project may be that the issue of digital economy is stabilised on the agenda of the city,” says Mr Kezy. It has also widened the city’s ambitions. Nyíregyháza joined TechRevolution, a new URBACT Transfer Network sharing Barnsley’s lessons, and has other transnational projects on the horizon. “For the current mayor, this was the first transnational project and I think it helped to launch other transnational initiatives, not only in the field of economic development, but the town is now part of an Interreg Europe project on sustainability,” says Mr Kezy.

Following efforts to improve digital skills in Nyíregyháza, URBACT helped look beyond the physical infrastructure, to focus on the social support systems that encourage entrepreneurship.

Nyíregyháza – a county capital in north-eastern Hungary – has an established industrial park, built in 1997 on a former Soviet base. Before joining TechTown, the city had already identified the possibility of creating a digital business incubator at this LOGIN Park, funded by the local authority and other public sources. However, it was not clear how such an institution might be run. After a 2015 central government initiative to encourage computer skills, which included handing out tablets and laptops, the city learnt it was one thing to acquire and distribute assets, but another to use them regularly and establish them as part of the fabric of a town.



Nyíregyháza's city centre

Digital boost for local business

By exploring its URBACT partner cities, Nyíregyháza learnt practical solutions for boosting its own digital economy. Béla Kezy, TechTown coordinator in Nyíregyháza, highlighted one inspiring visit to a start-up centre created in an abandoned school in Cēsis (LV). Although it was still early days for the Cēsis centre, the visit motivated Nyíregyháza to continue with their own plans. This was given further impetus when Mr Kezy and his colleagues visited Barnsley’s Digital Media Centre in the UK.

Like the facility in Cēsis, the Digital Media Centre is a series of workspaces – but it is a few years older, and has developed into a hub of business activity, from start-up workshops to conferences, seminars and networking. With the Digital

Media Centre as a model, Nyíregyháza improved its plans for an incubation centre, identifying funding streams and, importantly, defining the staff needed. “We can hopefully avoid the fate of similar services in other areas where the infrastructure is being used for other ends, where it has failed or it isn’t helping locally,” says Mr Kezy.

Not only has the Digital Media Centre served as a model, but there is ongoing dialogue between the Hungarian and English cities. Knowledge transfer between Nyíregyháza and Barnsley will continue after the end of the network on how to run an incubator successfully. “The fear was how we would operate it, now we have a good example,” says Mr Kezy. Nyíregyháza has learnt that it takes motivated, committed staff – and links with a broader ecosystem. “It’s not just a

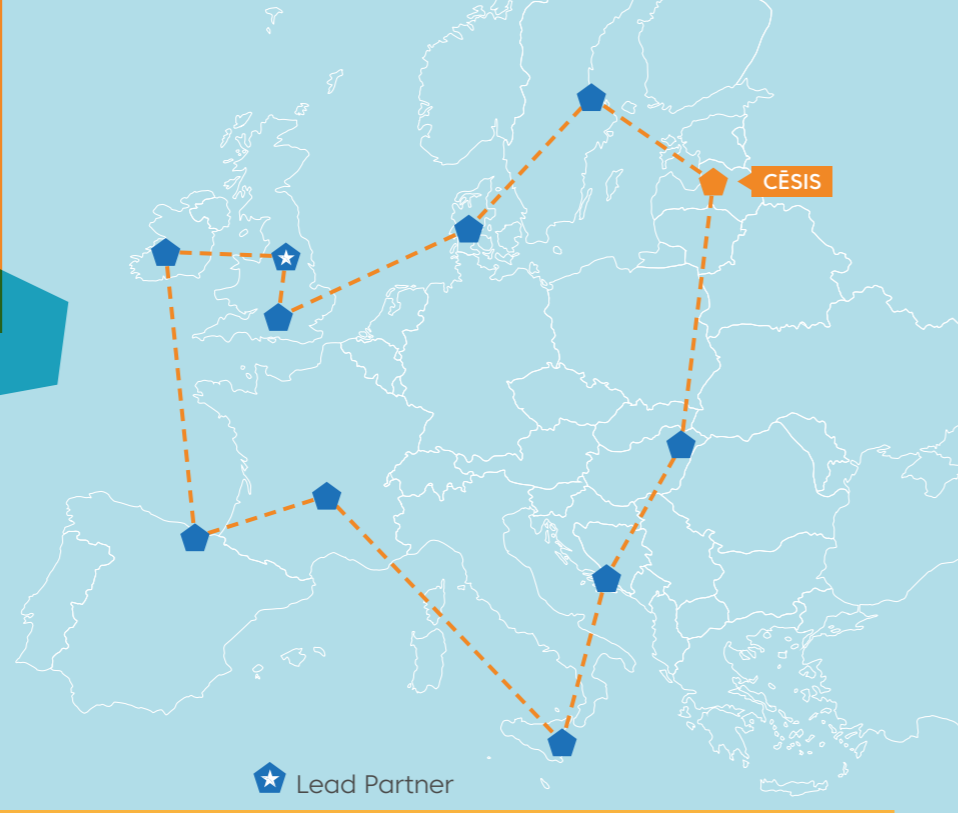


Sóstó, saline lake, 6km away from the city centre

DIGITAL TRANSITION STARTS YOUNG

Key information

- Location: **Cēsis (Latvia)**
- Population: **18 065**
- Involved in URBACT network: **TechTown**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/techtown>



By working closely with schools, universities and businesses, local authorities in the historic town of Cēsis have made major steps to boost digital education and entrepreneurship.



Meeting with the digital people

While Estonia has been styled the “Digital Republic” by *New Yorker* magazine, Cēsis lies 85 km to the south of Latvia – a country that relies on more traditional industries such as high quality metalworking. This capacity is buoyed by the strengths of Latvia’s education system, particularly in technical subjects. Cēsis is something of an anomaly in that, as a beautiful historic town set amid forests and lakes, it has relied on tourism and services for many of its jobs. Yet like many towns in Latvia it suffered during the recent economic crisis from losing young people to internal and international migration.

Comparing Latvia’s prowess in digital entrepreneurship with that of its northern neighbour, Evija Taurene, Chief

Planner in the Cēsis district municipality says, “Part of Estonia’s success in the digital sector is because of bold and innovative national governance, and we are in no way competing with Tallinn or Tartu. There are also things to learn for local actions, mainly regarding business support.” Of all the benefits of the URBACT TechTown network, it was this emphasis on creating a local network that proved to be most useful in Cēsis. Their transnational workshops in Tallinn (EE) emphasised mapping existing and ideal ecosystems of entrepreneurship – and imagining how to move from one towards the other.

Super-inspirational

“Being the smallest town in the network, it was not always easy to see how the innovative actions our partner cities were implementing would translate to our local context. But the URBACT experience has definitely been super-inspirational for us, and our town is quite ambitious!” says Evija Taurene. Several initiatives that Cēsis saw in partner cities ended up in the impressive Action Plan for Digital Growth 2022 which emerged from their participation in TechTown. Particularly useful were the ‘We Code Cabin’ camp from Barnsley (UK), and the ‘Digital Toddlers’ programme from the Loop City

“The URBACT experience has been super-inspirational for us, and our town is quite ambitious!”

Evija Taurene

cluster of municipalities around Copenhagen (DK). “Of course, many activities that have started already, or will start soon enough, have come from our own ideas and local context. However, it has helped the town identify the need to bolster support.” says Ms Taurene.

One of the key elements that partner cities discovered through TechTown has been identifying stakeholders, some of whom formed an URBACT Local Group to design actions. “We started to organise local digital events and it turned out we have not 10, but over 70 local citizens engaged in the digital economy! For a small town like ours, this seemed unbelievable,” says Ms Taurene. This process was aided by the establishment of the creative and digital industries centre, Skola6, in Cēsis in September 2015, just as TechTown was launched. Although this was already planned, the network’s investigation into how such centres can provide sustained – rather than fleeting – support to entrepreneurial activities was vital.

Meeting the tech people

Cēsis’ ideas for making the most of Skola6 came very much from their peers in the TechTown project. “Following their example, we decided to jump into the unknown and throw an event in order to find an opportunity to meet the community in person. Three local meet-ups have been organised, bringing together more than 50 individuals interested in the digital economy,” says Ms Taurene.

Community building events will also help to put Cēsis on the map in Latvia, and eventually – they hope – the Baltics,

as a place where tech events happen – no small ambition given Estonia’s strengths in the field. “We hope that this might create interest both from local non-tech people to explore new career opportunities, and also draw a new public – future citizens – to Cēsis,” adds Ms Taurene.

Digital education

Having mapped ecosystems for supporting digital entrepreneurship, ultimately the URBACT Local Group looked to education as the primary lever for change and improvement. In their Action Plan for Digital Growth 2022, the town make clear their dedication to education. Cēsis is fortunate to be home to a branch of Riga Technical University. However, the group wanted to prioritise the very young. “We wish to improve access to digital learning opportunities for all citizens, [regardless of] their age group. TechTown partners (especially Loop City in Denmark and Basingstoke in Great Britain) have shown examples of engaging kids in digital education from a really young age,” the document states.

By organising events and discussions, the municipality has managed to put digital education on the local agenda. “Although schools are slow in making changes, they now understand that it is important. Some are even opening up new extracurricular activities and programmes this September,” says Ms Taurene. “Still, we have to fight some of the myths concerning digital education. Some people still think that if kids only sit at the computer, they will forget how to write, read and communicate.”



A meet-up with people interested in digital economy

AN INTEGRATION PLAN FOR MIGRANTS, BY MIGRANTS

Key information

- Location: **Roquetas de Mar (Spain)**
- Population: **97 100**
- Involved in URBACT network: **ARRIVAL CITIES**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/arrival-cities>



★ Lead Partner

Building on its participation in the URBACT ARRIVAL CITIES network, Roquetas de Mar secured EUR 10 million of European funding to implement its urban development strategy for the successful integration of migrants. This was achieved by a process that effectively engaged local migrant populations and services in integrated action planning.

The old fishing village of Roquetas de Mar in Andalusia, Spain became one of the first tourist resorts in Spain in the 1960s. More recently, a major driver of economic growth has been a rapidly expanding intensive agricultural economy. This growth has attracted large numbers of migrants looking for work.

The municipality has experienced rapid population growth from 28 000 in 1990 to 97 000 by 2018. Migrants now make up at least 30% of the permanent resident population. The municipality has tended to be positive about the contribution of migrants to the city economy and created the Municipal Office for Migrants' Integration in 1997. However, migrant populations continue to suffer greater inequality than the Spanish population, with irregular migrants at particular risk.

◆ An action plan supported by investment

Through its participation in the URBACT Arrival Cities network, Roquetas de Mar successfully developed an Integrated Action Plan to support the integration of migrants, and tackle related challenges such as the rise of xenophobic movements.

The plan is based on a number of guiding principles and lines of action that aim to: strengthen stakeholder capacity; promote the benefits of diversity; improve inter-cultural

understanding; and tackle educational disadvantage and ghettoisation.

The Integrated Action Plan was incorporated into the Municipal Integration Plan, which was officially approved on 10 April 2018. At the launch event, José Galdeado, Municipal Councillor for Social Services was clear: "Today marks the end of the project, but we do not stop here. The strategic plan which we presented today will give the work continuity."

This continuity has already been supported by the awarding to Roquetas de Mar of EUR 10 million for Integrated Sustainable Urban Development under the European Regional Development Fund. The award was based on a strategy to identify and implement best practices from European level, based strongly on the lessons from Arrival Cities.

José Juan Rodríguez, Councillor and Deputy-Mayor of Roquetas de Mar, is sure that "ARRIVAL CITIES was a crucial element in securing funds... [It] was where everything started, with the exchange between different European cities, with a really magnificent local group whose work has culminated in the Integrated Action Plan, which will be implemented through various European projects, one of which is the Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategy and another the Regional Development Strategy."

"ARRIVAL CITIES was a crucial element in securing funds... [It] was where everything started, with the exchange between different European cities, with a really magnificent local group whose work has culminated in the Integrated Action Plan."

Matthew Brown

◆ A plan built on local and migrant voices

A key strength of the process to develop the action plan was the engagement of local stakeholders and migrant representatives. The main body for its development was the URBACT Local Group that Roquetas de Mar established under the coordination of Juan Francisco Iborra, Head of Social Services in the municipality.

The URBACT Local Group was composed of 15 members, including key providers of public services and NGOs working with migrants, such as the local offices of the Andalusian Employment Service, public health and education services, the Spanish Red Cross and the Foundation for Coexistence and Social Cohesion (CEPAIM). Importantly, the group also benefitted from strong local political support, with the active involvement of the two city councillors quoted above.

To ensure that the plan was for migrants and by migrants, the technical work of the group was supported by broader consultation meetings that attracted migrant participants.

At a first consultation meeting, Juan Francisco Iborra asked migrant associations to elaborate proposed actions. These were developed over several months and then presented to the URBACT Local Group members.

Later on, participatory forums were organised to allow the Group to discuss its working documents with stakeholders. A first forum discussed the provisional SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) analysis, while a second considered draft action lines for the Integrated Action Plan. Stakeholder feedback led to real modifications and improvements.

◆ Incorporating lessons from transnational exchange

Selected URBACT Local Group members participated in each of ARRIVAL CITIES' five transnational exchange meetings - on civic participation, education, reception services, labour market and community cohesion - before feeding back to the group. In addition, the local group coordinator from Dresden participated in one meeting in Roquetas to exchange ideas and experiences.

Interesting practices were presented at a participatory forum to obtain stakeholder feedback on how these could be integrated locally. The result is an action plan that includes 'Incorporation of international experiences' into almost every activity line.



The members of the URBACT Local Group in Roquetas de Mar

Roquetas de Mar Integrated Action Plan – 8 Key Actions

- 1 Mapping of key local assets for migrant integration
- 2 Training programme for public officials working with immigrants
- 3 A capacity-building 'train the trainer' programme for immigrant associations
- 4 Targeted community social work in a deprived neighbourhood (the '200 homes')
- 5 Creation of a multifunctional inter-cultural space in the town centre
- 6 Educational intervention programme targeting young migrants at risk of low educational outcomes and absenteeism
- 7 Training courses for adult migrants
- 8 Multicultural celebration days and awareness campaigns

LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS TO RESPOND TO NEW MIGRANT FLOWS

Key information

- Location: **Vantaa (Finland)**
- Population: **223 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **ARRIVAL CITIES**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/arrival-cities>



Participation in the URBACT ARRIVAL CITIES network has supported strengthened partnerships between local organisations and authorities working on migrant integration in Vantaa. It delivered a migrant-focused Integrated Action Plan that has been officially incorporated into the city's Multicultural Plan (2018-2022).



Migrant-led NGOs joined local officials in the URBACT Local Group

Responding to new migration flows

Vantaa is one of the four municipalities in the Helsinki Metropolitan Area. With a population of over 200 000, it is the fourth most populated city of Finland. The city's 30 000+ migrants now represent over 17% of the total population – the highest proportion of any municipality in Finland.

Since 2002, Vantaa has had a City Integration Programme – within a broader Multicultural Programme - to integrate migrants into Vantaa's education system, workforce and society. However, in more recent years the city had been

receiving new profiles of highly educated migrants and students, as well as a new wave of asylum seekers - accommodating over 1 000 in four reception centres.

Vantaa was immediately interested when Amadora (PT) pitched ARRIVAL CITIES network to respond to new flows of migration alongside the ongoing challenge of integration of settled migrant groups. Both cities had already worked together in the 2007-2009 URBACT network 'Managing Migration and Integration at Local Level' (MILE).

Applying URBACT methods

A comprehensive stakeholder mapping was undertaken to identify appropriate members to form an URBACT Local Group whose task was to develop an Integrated Action Plan on migrant integration in Vantaa. Priority was given to local migrant-led NGOs, along with local officials.

Margarita Sakilayan-Latvala, Training Coordinator at the Nicehearts NGO, was made Group Coordinator and sent on to the URBACT Summer University in 2016 to learn how to develop participatory action plans. She returned enthused with ideas and methods for developing the Plan through a real co-creation process. Together with the rest of the URBACT Local Group they identified that one of the local challenges was the lack of collaboration between

stakeholders working on migration. This was a clear indication that the Plan should focus on 'facilitating and strengthening partnerships between different stakeholders'.

In addition to its own meetings, the group held four wider consultation events to develop the Plan. For example, 50 local association representatives discussed how to involve volunteers in migrant reception and integration processes. Another meeting explored improved cooperation between NGOs, authorities, universities and entrepreneurs.

Inspiration from a German integration project

Vantaa benefitted from presentations and visits on a range of inspiring practices among the ARRIVAL CITIES partner cities. However, they developed a particularly deep cooperation with the German partner Oldenburg after it presented its 'Integration through Qualification' (IQ) network at the ARRIVAL CITIES transnational meeting on labour market integration.

The IQ network supports migrants to have their qualifications recognised and to access job training. In addition to vocational training and business start-up support services, it has developed specific skills-auditing procedures and 'German at the workplace' language-class modules. The network is promoted by the Federal Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs and the Federal Employment Agency.

Vantaa invited IQ to present their project and results to more than 100 local stakeholders. Hannele Lautiola, Head of Multicultural Affairs in Vantaa, explains that "The German IQ program is developing a lot of the things we need in Finland on a large scale. We also want to build that, but first we have to create the legal basis."

Towards implementing the plan

The Integrated Action Plan developed by the local group outlines actions aiming to:

1. Develop partnerships through formal and non-formal networks
2. Facilitate collaboration between NGOs and the city
3. Strengthen neighbourhood relations

Key actions include: making vocational training programmes more accessible to migrants; developing a network of volunteers on integration; creating an exchange programme for NGOs and local authority professionals; and piloting community-led local projects.

The Plan was officially incorporated into the city's Multicultural Plan in April 2018. The city's Multicultural Advisory Board, which will monitor implementation has also committed to holding an annual assessment meeting with the URBACT Local Group, which itself is maintained under the Plan.

Vantaa secured EUR 500 000 from the European Social Fund to implement a coaching programme for unemployed migrants developed by migrant-led NGOs and the city authority.

"One of the success stories in our ARRIVAL CITIES journey was that we really managed to use the networks and methodology from URBACT [and] at the same time find synergies with other funding programmes," concludes Hannele Lautiola.

"One of the success stories in our ARRIVAL CITIES journey was that we really managed to use the networks and methodology from URBACT [and] at the same time find synergies with other funding programmes."

Hannele Lautiola



Margarita Sakilayan-Latvala interview

ARRIVAL CITIES' Local Coordinator, Vantaa

Can you explain the main advantages of participating in URBACT?

The URBACT methodology gave us a framework to ensure that strategic planning is cooperative, based on co-creation and participatory approaches to make sure that all the voices are heard, including those of grassroots, NGOs and residents.

The methodology has improved our way of working (inclusion, co-creation) and built trust between operators. Cooperation with organisations has opened up new networks and funding opportunities. We have managed to combine different programmes in Vantaa, including the European Social Fund, URBACT and Erasmus+.

We really have very limited resources compared to Helsinki or Espoo. [But], when we had our final seminar to present the Plan, a colleague from another city and a representative from the Ministry said that Vantaa is a laboratory for integration in Finland. We took risks in trying different things.



URBACT has created new and lasting working relationships at local level

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN A CITY GETS ITS CITIZENS INVOLVED?

Key information

Location: **Baia Mare (Romania)**

Population: **135 000**

Involved in URBACT network: **BoostInno**

More information: <http://urbact.eu/boostinno>



Baia Mare is restructuring its economy away from industry towards services and manufacturing. Encouraging social innovation, however, has proved a challenge. As part of the URBACT BoostInno network, the city experimented with new tools to help stimulate civic engagement, starting with a participatory budget.

Situated at the foothills of the Carpathian mountains, near the borders with Hungary and Ukraine, Baia Mare has a reputation as one of Romania's most beautiful cities. While its position gives it great potential as a centre for tourism and logistics, the city has struggled with economic, social and environmental problems, many of which go back to the area's intensive mining activity during the communist period. Baia Mare had already worked with URBACT to address some of these most urgent issues. In 2008, for example, as part of the LUMASEC network, the city tackled

"With the BoostInno network we wanted to really try something bottom-up."

Dorin Miclaus

concerned with encouraging educational, economic and cultural initiatives. "We achieved some important results in our previous URBACT work, but we were still operating with quite a top-down approach which wasn't working," reflects Dorin Miclaus, expert in sustainable development

pollution in and around the urban area. In 2013, they developed a more effective land-use policy as part of the USEAct network.

Thanks in part to the success of these initiatives, and hard lessons learnt along the way, the municipality's priorities have shifted. Today, the city is particularly

for the municipality. "With BoostInno network we wanted to really try something bottom-up." The formation of City Halls and the election of Cătălin Cherecheș as mayor and head of a citizen's coalition marked two recent attempts at decentralising the political process. BoostInno however, was the first municipality's strategic attempt to encourage active citizenship.

Any idea is better than no ideas at all

The biggest breakthrough for Baia Mare came when the city hosted a three-day transnational meeting of BoostInno partner cities in March 2017. Alongside civil servants, this meeting was led by representatives from NGOs, businesses and the education sector. Some travelled from the nearby university city of Cluj-Napoca (RO) to participate. A teacher, Dancu Natalia, and her students gave presentations on the history of the surrounding Maramureș region, while artisans and artists of all ages exhibited traditional food, crafts and dancing. Instead of just sharing good practices, the partners were asked to brainstorm specific solutions as to how to encourage civic participation in Baia Mare, among these local stakeholders. "This collaboration was an enormous confidence boost," says Mr Miclaus, "before that, people didn't trust themselves to get involved. This was a turning point. A group of the children who did a presentation



The BoostInno partners discuss challenges in Baia Mare

even organised themselves as local tourist guides later that summer."

Following the meeting, Baia Mare developed an Integrated Action Plan called 'City and citizens'. This too was the product of URBACT tools. 'Sense mapping', for example, enabled participants of the URBACT Local Group to visualise stakeholder relations in an entirely new way, and theorise ways of building synergies between, for example, museum workers and local media, schools and start-ups. A diverse range of solutions were proposed during the meetings based on priority areas of cultural heritage, youth and education. Some solutions were small scale, like planting fruit trees and building allotments. Others, like establishing a network of smart neighbourhoods, were conceived as longer-term initiatives. The most popular proposals were communicated to a wider public in a series of dedicated BoostInno talks.

From zoom in to zoom out

Due to financial and time constraints, many of Baia Mare's most ambitious plans remain at a prototype stage or are yet to be tested. One important exception was the city's first ever participatory budget. The idea had been in place for several years, but it was the BoostInno meetings that provided the impetus for the scheme's actual implementation in September 2017. Citizens were encouraged to participate on an online platform, by pitching ideas for initiatives, and then voting for their favourites. As a result, 35 projects were proposed and 2 428 votes cast. The most popular was 'The Laboratory of Ideas', a project that aims to transform an old school building into an Information Technology and documentary centre in order to improve education and stop young people from moving away.

The process itself was an important 'first' for the city and will be developed in the future. "The platform was mainly used by people inside the project, or who had done other projects in the past," reflects Mr Miclaus, "so our challenge now is to move outwards." Thanks to BoostInno the infrastructure to do this is now in place. In spring 2018, the mayor announced that he wants to transform Baia Mare into a creative and participatory city, and tools like this will be at the centre of that drive.

The URBACT Local Group, meanwhile, has been developed into a body called 'Baia Mare Activ!' which will serve as a broker for reinventing the city. To further support this process, the municipality is also trialling a system of district panels to complement participation in the existing City Halls. As the city applies for further European funding, these URBACT-inspired initiatives represent a strong foundation from which to develop a more complex ecosystem of social innovation.

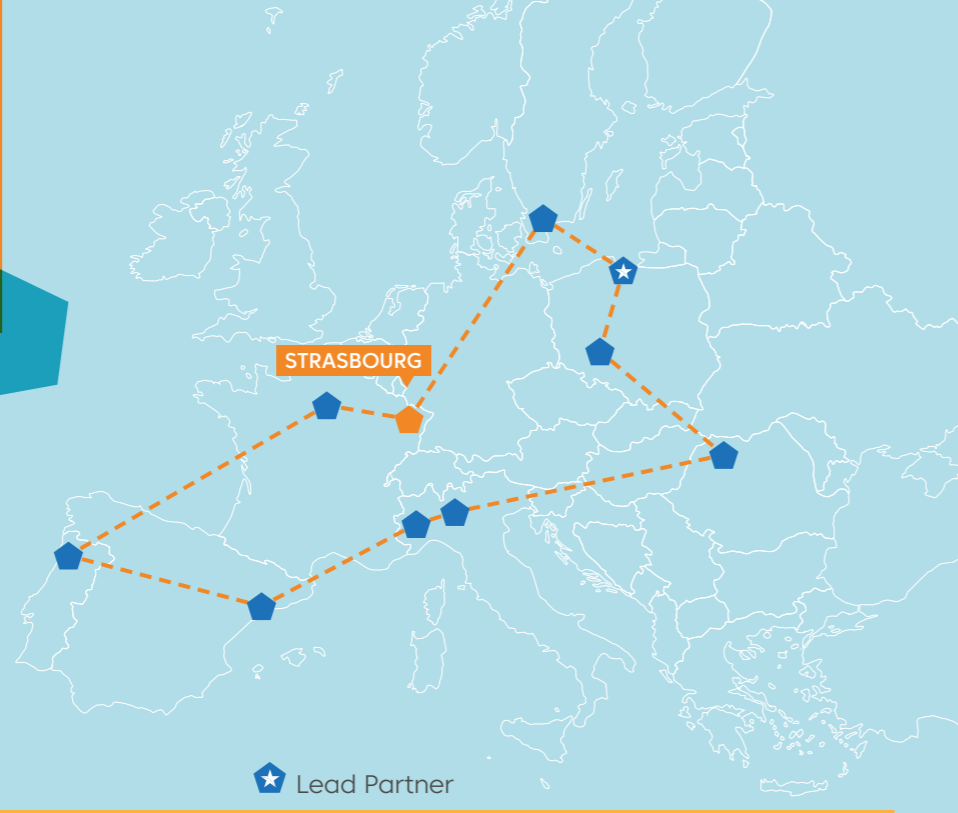


Baia Mare present their Integrated Action Plan to international practitioners in Milan

FROM CIVIL SERVANTS TO INSTITUTIONAL ENTREPRENEURS

Key information

- Location: **Strasbourg (France)**
- Population: **276 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **BoostInno**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/boostinno>



The municipality of Strasbourg has been working for years to establish itself as a broker for social innovation. As part of the URBACT BoostInno Network, the city discovered tools that helped them build a unified platform to support start-ups across the private and public sectors.

From car sharing schemes to open source software initiatives, Strasbourg has established itself over the past decade as a hotbed of social experimentation. This is not just about new products and services, but new ways of doing things. At the centre of it all has been the municipality's adoption of co-construction methodologies, designed to bridge the divide between the public and private sectors. The city even has a dedicated Council of Social Solidarity to mediate this process. Founded in 2010, this body, which brings together stakeholders from the municipality, businesses and NGOs, is a unique attempt to replace managerial public policy with a more collaborative model.

"We have been working for a long time on this, and we've achieved a lot," says Sandra Guilmin, Head of Social and Solidarity Economy at the municipality, "but while co-creation is strong, we still have to work on encouraging a culture of public participation, which sadly is not so advanced in France." As the city works to integrate silo-busting measures into its economic development strategy, 'Strasbourg éco 2030', it is also searching for new ways to empower citizens in this process. From the offset, then, the URBACT BoostInno network was conceived as part of this larger journey — an experiment to unlock the city's latent economic energy.

Stimulating, not managing, participation

Despite their relatively advanced starting point, practitioners from Strasbourg learnt a lot from the partner cities. "Our main benefit came from the international network," reflects Ms Guilmin. "Working together gave us a lot of examples not only about how cities are different but how we are similar." Strasbourg were particularly surprised, for example, to find that the municipality of Turin (IT) was also working on a project to integrate civil servants into their city's entrepreneurial ecosystem. Now, thanks to BoostInno, the two cities are exchanging reflections on how to avoid over-controlling the public. Cities like Milan (IT), meanwhile, provided novelties. Strasbourg were so impressed by their civic crowdfunding campaign — in which the municipality co-funded EUR 400 000 to support social initiatives — that they included an equivalent long-term goal in the Integrated Action Plan they defined as part of their work with BoostInno. This was approved by the city authorities and the Eurométropole in autumn 2018.

Beyond new relationships, the city also discovered useful tools thanks to URBACT. One of the most successful was Kumu, a data visualisation platform that had been used in the transnational meetings to compare and contrast the challenges of the partner cities. Strasbourg made use of its capacity to trace synergies across physical and mental spaces in order to visualise relations between stakeholders



The URBACT Local Group discuss an international case study from Milan

in a new way. As a result, the city's URBACT Local Group, which was made up of local business people and activists as well as municipal officers, were able to identify how the activities of a think tank called 'Appuiculteurs', for example, could be linked most effectively to 'KaléidosCOOP', a creative co-working, entrepreneurial and community space due to open in 2020. By using professional drawings and cartoons, the URBACT Local Group also worked to communicate the conclusions of these meetings to a wider public.

Linking circular and solidarity economies

The most tangible local success of BoostInno, however, was the support it provided during the formation of a dedicated communication platform for new enterprises with a strong social impact, called 'Start-up des Territoires'. The purpose of this initiative, which was already planned

"Working together gave us a lot of examples not only about how cities are different but how we are similar."

Sandra Guilmin

in 2015, was to link principles of circular economy with those of social and solidarity economies. The initiative also marked a shift in the city's governance paradigm that had been established with the Council of Social Solidarity: within the platform, public projects were considered as part of the same innovative ecosystem as private ones. By following the detailed guidelines of the Integrated Action

Plan, Start-up des Territoires was able to grow to attract the participation of over 1000 individuals. As of autumn 2018 the platform has given birth to 15 projects in diverse fields, from agriculture to tourism. Over 200 jobs will be created as a result.

"Strasbourg was not just sharing and learning but actively creating new tools," enthuses Peter Wolkowski, Lead Expert of BoostInno. "This was one of the biggest successes of the network." If early in the project the URBACT Local Group had been so concerned to communicate clearly to non-specialists, by the end they were also keen to provide a legacy for professional practitioners in other cities. Beyond maps, comics and diagrams, the city also produced a technical handbook on co-creation, which explains the theory and practice of brokering. The process of developing this provided a useful opportunity for the municipality to evaluate their involvement in BoostInno. Its positive reception from the public also provided a valuable recognition of years of work in this new and risky field.

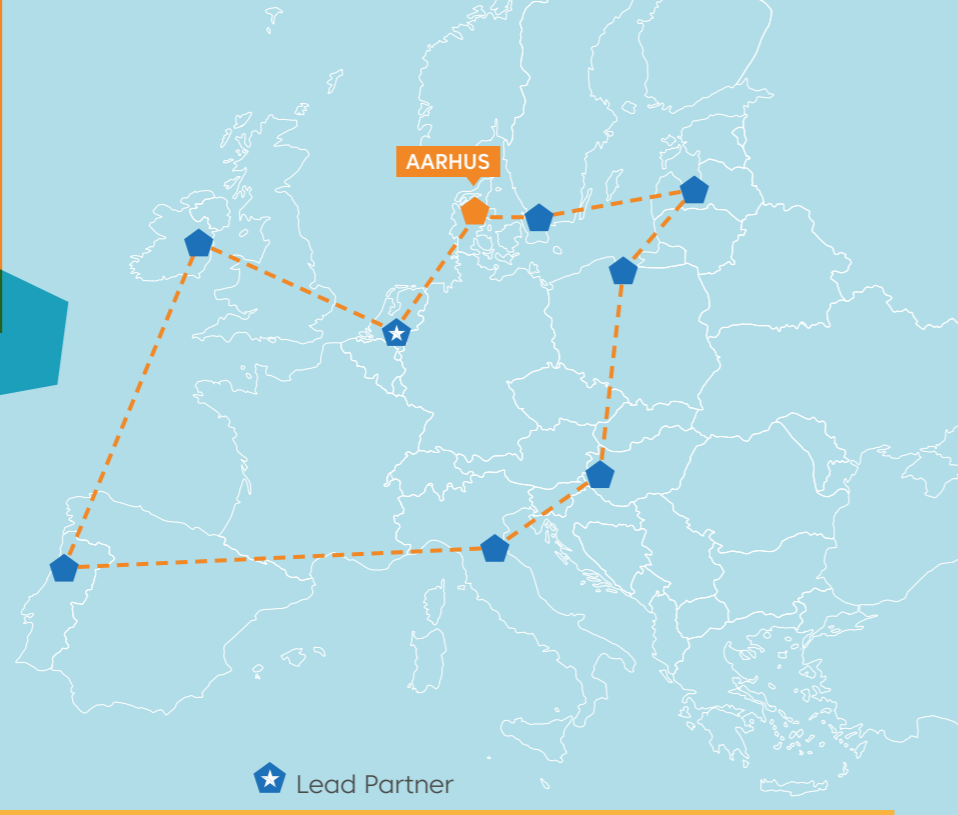


Strasbourg's URBACT Local Group used drawings and cartoons to communicate to a wider public

A WELFARE PLAN WITH A FRESH APPROACH TO JOBSEEKER SUPPORT

Key information

- Location: Aarhus (Denmark)
- Population: 324 000
- Involved in URBACT network: CHANGE!
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/change>



A new model of citizenship is starting to take shape in Aarhus. Amid intense debate about how this might look, the city's participation in the URBACT CHANGE! network has been vital for experimentation.

◆ The power of trust

Before joining URBACT, Aarhus experimented a new project to reframe the municipality's relationship with longterm jobseekers. 'Long term unemployed take the lead' project was tested by almost 100 individuals allocated EUR 6 700 each to help them in their job-hunting process. Unlike the existing system, the beneficiaries were free to spend the funds in whatever way they considered useful. "It was a very strange experience," admits Anne Marie Frederiksen, a Municipal Consultant and one of the designers of the initiative.

By joining URBACT, her team made use of cities' and experts' knowledge within the CHANGE! network. "Eindhoven (NL) were helpful in training us on how to better deal with people on a personal level and we benefited a great deal from staff exchanges with them. As a result our job consultants became less like managers more like sparring partners. They were primarily there to give advice and inspire."

A full evaluation is still underway but early results are encouraging. Of the 97 beneficiaries, 32 are now out of the benefits system and several individuals have found stable employment. One of the most surprising findings for Ms Frederiksen and her team was the number of beneficiaries who used the funds to kickstart their own businesses, "as people in the public sector, we were not



People dancing at the Rethink Activism Festival, September 2017

expecting this, lots of people used the money to fulfil dreams they'd had for a long time. We've got people in fashion, tech, baking, and car repair among other things."

Given the potential impact for both the local economy and individuals within it, the initiative was recognised as an URBACT Good Practice in 2017. It is now being considered as a model to be scaled up within Denmark, and has attracted much discussion in the CHANGE! network.



A meeting point at the Rethink Activism Festival, September 2017

Following this experience and discussions within the Network, the City of Aarhus and its local group of stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) designed an Integrated Action Plan for public services. Organised at grass roots level, these were 'The Warm Welcome Society', an orientation programme for new arrivals to the city; the 'Rethink Activism Festival', run by Paul Natorp, a local activist and social entrepreneur, which gave visibility to actors like those at 'The Institut for X'. If the URBACT Local Group was a bridge across the city's divisions, this framework ensured these potentially disparate activities were united as part of the same ambition towards collaborative citizenship.

"In our URBACT Local Group we managed to go from words to action," reflects Torben Glock, a Citizens' Services Special Consultant for the municipality, and co-ordinator of the URBACT Local Group. "Based on the success of initiatives like these I think we're ready to take even more risks."

◆ Working across silos thanks to URBACT

"This was one of the reasons we became involved in the CHANGE! network, as a meeting place for people usually confined to different worlds. Municipality and citizens are each other's prerequisites in the development of our city," says Torben Glock. Paul Natorp had similar motivations when he joined the network. He says, "We have so many interactions with different parts of the municipality but we need a more global vision. Different positions have to be unified if we are to build an ecosystem of co-creation."

Designing an Integrated Action Plan for the city services amidst such a diverse local group was one concrete step in enacting this philosophy. "For Aarhus this was particularly clear," says Ferenc Szigeti-Böröcz, Lead Expert of the CHANGE! network. "More than any other of the partner cities, they used the collaborative framework as a way of structuring their work."



Stakeholders gather at the Dokk1 Innovation Centre

RETHINKING WELFARE FROM A NEIGHBOURHOOD LEVEL

Key information

Location: **Gdańsk (Poland)**

Population: **461 000**

Involved in URBACT network: **CHANGE!**

More information: <http://urbact.eu/change>



★ Lead Partner

For years the municipality of Gdańsk has been struggling to develop a network of citizen-led community centres. Thanks to the city's participation in the URBACT CHANGE! network, these are now a major item on the political agenda.

A few kilometres south of Gdańsk's world famous port, next to a roaring bypass, is the district of Orunia. For decades this area has been synonymous with neglect. Plagued by underinvestment and a lack of public spaces, and prone to flooding, it is an example of Poland's 'sociological vacuum'. This term, which is usually linked to the legacy of communism, describes a process where individuals retreat into small communities of family and close friends, with little participation in civic life.

Among Polish cities, the municipality of Gdańsk has shown a particular commitment to challenging this phenomenon. One of the best examples can be seen in the neighbourhood house scheme. These spaces began to be established in

2010 on the initiative of local activists who were inspired by the British model of community centres. They are funded by municipal grants but everyday management is delegated entirely to NGOs and citizens' collectives. Crucially, they do not serve a single group but are there to provide activities for the neighbourhood as a whole.

Orunia is home to one of the first and most successful examples. The district's neighbourhood house receives over 1 000 visits a month and functions, among other things, as a youth centre, debate club and immigration advice centre. The surrounding area has also seen a 1 000% increase in social initiatives since it was established.



The URBACT Local Group meet at the neighbourhood house in Orunia



Winning entries from the URBACT Local Group design competition

"It was useful for us to focus on concrete solutions. We encountered a lot of subtle things that we wouldn't have been able to see in, say, a document."

Monika Chabior

place and deal with finance. We realised we needed some processes for evaluating who we were and what our goals were."

And so Ms Chabior and her colleagues sought inspiration from other European cities in the URBACT CHANGE! network. By being in this network, Gdańsk set up a local group of stakeholders (URBACT Local Group) to exchange with their European peers and to find solutions to the challenges they faced.

"Thanks to conversations in this local group, we made the decision to organise some smaller scale alternatives to neighbourhood houses, called clubs," says Ms Chabior. "Unlike full-scale houses, these can be used for specific groups or single communities, and anyone can set them up." Early signs suggest these intermediary structures have been an effective way of bypassing the perceived difficulty of developing neighbourhood houses. The hope now is that this will reignite a spontaneous expansion of different kinds of community centres across the city, led by a diverse group of local animators.

A broader impact is also being seen in local politics. Ahead of municipal elections in October 2018, neighbourhood houses and community organising have been unusually high on the agenda. "This was a great success of the URBACT Local Group activities," confirms Ms Magdalena Skiba,

A house for every district

Despite success stories like these, it became clear after a few years that the initiative wasn't going to spread on its own. "Naming a place a neighbourhood house seemed to mean different things for different people," says Monika Chabior, an activist from Gdańsk. "Lots of people saw it as too much responsibility to find the location, people to run the

from the municipality's Department of Social Development. "Every candidate is talking about these issues, they are all promising more money, and neighbourhood houses for every district. Of course we have concerns, these spaces need real community leaders, but thanks to our work, the houses now have visibility like never before."

Learning from other cities: an asset to the project

"It was useful for us to focus on concrete solutions. We encountered a lot of subtle things that we wouldn't have been able to see in, say, a document," says Ms Chabior. During a visit to Rotterdam (NL), her team reflected on new ways of delegating roles to tackle a growing problem of exhaustion among managers of the neighbourhood houses. They also found inspiration in Eindhoven's (NL) concept of a generalist, a mediator between residents and specialists who uses a personal approach to engage potentially marginalised groups. This was identified as a possible model for social workers in Gdańsk.

It was a workshop on community organisation in London (UK), however, that provided the most transferable tools. "In the local group, one of our plans was to develop integration in and between districts," says Magdalena Skiba. "For me, as a person coming from a department in charge of monitoring, supervision and control of public social services, to develop a common understanding among civil servants, service providers and activists was a very useful experience. This meeting also showed us that public administration has or can develop new tools to empower local communities to take over responsibility for their neighbourhoods."



URBACT Local Group members present their design ideas for a neighbourhood house

Back in Poland the local group decided to build a dedicated space to encourage similar silo-breaking exchanges within the city. The Gdańsk School of Solidarity Everyday brought facilitators from neighbourhood houses together with municipal workers, social economy managers and other stakeholders to discuss how to stimulate bottom-up participation. Alongside local examples, the group studied URBACT Good Practices and drew up plans for a People To People (P2P) platform through which people might co-create a shared pedagogy in order to exchange knowledge more efficiently.

DATA, CAMERA, ACTION! A CITY'S PLAN FOR ACTIVE CITIZENS

Key information

- Location: **Liepāja (Latvia)**
- Population: **71 130**
- Involved in URBACT network: **VITAL CITIES**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/vitalcities>



Through the URBACT VITAL CITIES network, the Baltic city of Liepāja tackled serious socio-economic challenges through broadened participation in physical activity. While improving leisure facilities, the cooperation also improved community relations, and slimmed down the bloated bureaucratic processes.

As a former Soviet Union territory, the long-term legacy of the Cold War period is still visible in Liepāja, the third-largest city in Latvia. Current challenges include a declining population, poor health, and an unemployment rate of 11.5%, compared with Latvia's national average of 7.4%. But the city is hoping to transform remnants of the past into new opportunities.

As with all VITAL CITIES partners, Liepāja brought a wealth of good practice to the network, alongside its need for learning and capacity building. Liepāja's Urban Development Programme for 2014–2020 outlined plans to promote more active inhabitant lifestyles and improve deprived areas. In 2015, the city began installing free street workout equipment in public spaces. Liepāja also has 200km of cycle paths, BMX tracks, basketball fields, an athletics stadium, beach-volleyball fields, football pitches and skate parks, all free to use. And the city is well known for organising large-scale public sports events, including boxing championships, triathlons, tennis tournaments and beach volleyball competitions.

One good practice case study is Beberliņi Park, part of an abandoned former military camp in the north of the city but now used as a space for leisure and sports. The community began to use the area – including woodland, open space

and a body of water – for swimming, running, skating and volleyball. The municipality chose to support the initiative and has now created long-term development plans to improve the park.

Despite making positive steps, the city still struggled with poor health as a result of sedentary lifestyles. Liepāja had no comprehensive methods of measuring who used the city's sports facilities and felt limited in its capacity and knowledge to implement innovative, successful solutions and work together with the community. By joining VITAL CITIES, Liepāja wanted to motivate more citizens to use the free sports facilities, improve existing facilities, learn new ways of involving different groups of people in physical activity, and develop a monitoring system to capture data on usage of facilities.

With VITAL CITIES support, Liepāja formed an URBACT Local Group including members of the council's sports, health and community participation departments, as well as local NGOs, small business owners, and residents. The local group decided to focus on Beberliņi Park, which it believed could still benefit from improvements. The group hoped new infrastructure and events would attract more users and even tourists.

From winter swimming to data capture

During a 'Deep Dive' visit from partner cities, delegates saw Beberliņi Park and discussed how it could improve. Taking part, Hugo Nunes, Deputy Mayor of Lead Partner city Loulé (PT), described the visit as an important moment of exchange of experiences between the 10 cities.

The URBACT Local Group then organised a series of free sports events in Beberliņi Park to make it more inclusive and family-friendly. In January 2018, the Latvian open winter swimming championship was held there, as part of efforts to enhance the park's use during colder months and demonstrate its value as a resource. More than 200 people participated, of all ages. The local group collaboratively designed further improvements at Beberliņi and set them out in a seven-year Integrated Action Plan. When the planned new path networks for walking, cycling and jogging are implemented, they will increase opportunities for healthy activities and improve connectivity to the wider area.

Alongside the work at Beberliņi, VITAL CITIES helped Liepāja understand how to create a database to enable analysis of general physical activity in the city, thus facilitating more targeted events, as well as evidence-based applications for financing of facilities. The local group was inspired by partner city Birmingham's (UK) creation of a database to measure and analyse participation in sports events and facilities. To start testing a more evidence-based approach, in 2017, the Liepāja local group installed a video camera along a popular bike path, monitoring popularity and types of usage. As a result, the Integrated Action Plan proposes placing several new video cameras around the city to

track and collect information on physical activity and facilities usage.

The Plan also proposes a public web platform, and an overhaul of bureaucratic processes, to help launch small, community-led projects quickly, encouraging innovation and improving engagement with residents. The platform will allow community members to submit proposed sports initiatives, and residents to vote online for what they want to see actioned.

Artis Lagzdiņš, Head of Liepāja City Council Sports Department, says, "We saw many inspirational

practices in the network. For instance, Birmingham (UK) with their Active Parks initiative and information gathering system. From Ústí nad Labem (CZ), their good practice about healthy walking paths in the city centre." The best thing that VITAL CITIES brought to Liepāja, he explains, was the collaboration and improved relationships between the municipality and NGOs, thanks to their involvement in the URBACT Local Group, where everyone worked for a common goal. This working infrastructure will now continue to successfully make improvements in Liepāja.

"We saw many inspirational practices in the network. For instance, Birmingham (UK) with their Active Parks initiative and information gathering system. From Ústí nad Labem (CZ), their good practice about healthy walking paths in the city centre."

Artis Lagzdiņš

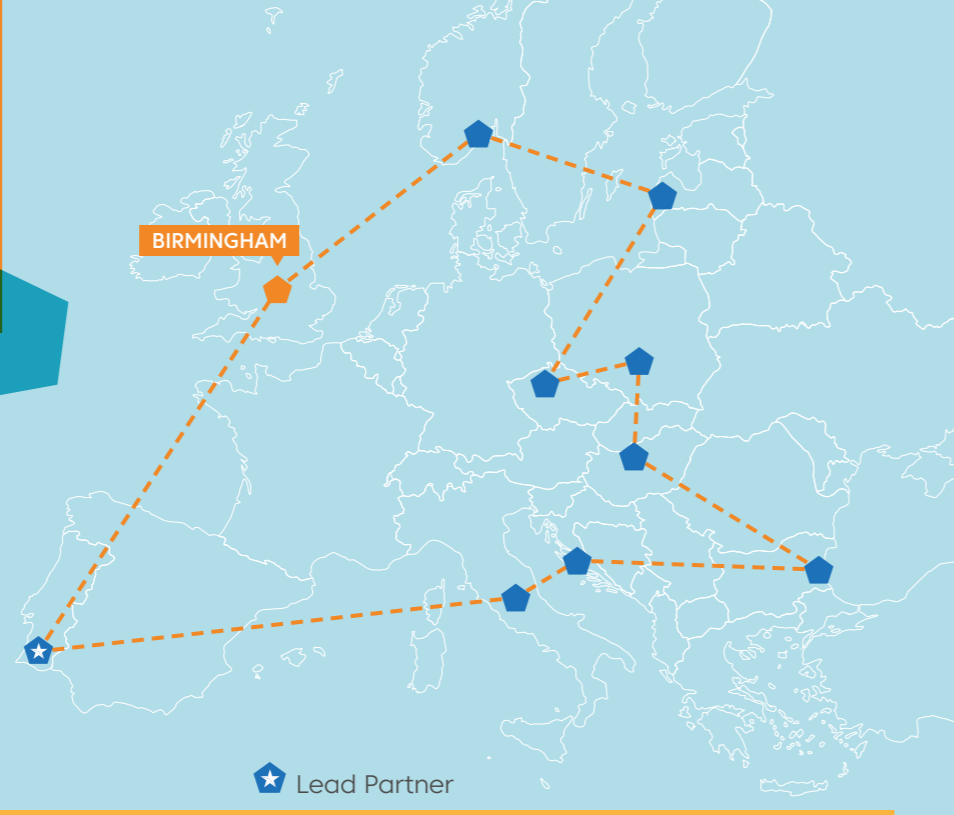


Free sports events in Beberliņi Park

BUILDING A SUPPORT NETWORK FOR A MORE ACTIVE CITY

Key information

- Location: **Birmingham (United Kingdom)**
- Population: **1.1 million**
- Involved in URBACT network: **VITAL CITIES**
- More information: <https://www.urbact.eu/vital-cities>



Collaboration within the URBACT VITAL CITIES network helped Birmingham better deliver services to increase citizen health in deprived neighbourhoods.

Birmingham is the UK's second-largest city – and its population is growing. Its funding, however, has shrunk; since 2010, Birmingham has lost GBP 590 million (around EUR 660 million) from its budget. Urban inequality is worsening, with citizens' life expectancy and health varying considerably between neighbourhoods.

When Birmingham joined the VITAL CITIES network the aim was to use the city's physical activity services better to increase social inclusion and health equality. Birmingham wanted to monitor physical activity systematically in order to identify gaps and build evidence to show which facilities and programmes needed funding.

Council-run campaigns for inclusive participation in physical activity were already in progress: 'Big Birmingham Bikes' provides thousands of free bikes in deprived areas, while 'Active Parks' offers free activities such as Zumba and Tai Chi in green spaces across the city, benefiting 114 000 people since 2014 – over half of them from Birmingham's most deprived areas.



TAWS walking football

The success of these initiatives showed Birmingham's peers in VITAL CITIES that instead of spending large sums on new facilities, they could mobilise and include citizens by organising free activities in existing green spaces. "This practice was spotted as a quick-win action and all other partner cities were encouraged to replicate it, like a transfer practice," explains Twan de Bruijn, Lead Expert for the VITAL CITIES network. "Birmingham is a partner that really can express the value of transnational exchange."



TAWS cycle group and coaching

'Deep dives' revealed better ways to capture data

Birmingham undertook a 'deep dive', a tool used by VITAL CITIES partners to evaluate policies and services around physical activity in the city and identify areas for improvement. Following a thorough 'self-analysis', including an audit of existing service delivery, Birmingham hosted a peer review visit from partner cities, who joined local stakeholders for a two-day workshop.

Together, VITAL CITIES partners analysed how to harness technology and data collection – such as online registration and GPS monitoring – to better understand who participates in physical activity in the city, and identify the barriers for those who don't. "Visiting delegates had very powerful thoughts," explains Birmingham City Council's Ravinder Bains, "and gave us the confidence to be strong in our desire to shape wider policy to tackle our city's disadvantaged and neglected communities." Highlighting the event's success, Mr De Bruijn says, "It worked as an interactive prototype, similar to a hackathon." Thanks to this comprehensive feedback and advice, Birmingham City Council set out an integrated plan to improve its approach to capturing physical activity data.

Ravinder Bains

Another major outcome of URBACT is 'The Active Wellbeing Society' (TAWS), a new community benefit society that empowers and enables people in deprived areas through wellbeing-focused activities. "We had the kernel of the idea already, but VITAL CITIES helped to bring TAWS into a politically acceptable and viable policy decision," explains TAWS Director of Insight, Steven Rose. "It helped strengthen the argument that this is about being active physically and civically, not just about sport for the sporty." Network partner cities helped boost support for TAWS. "We had an international peer review showing support for our approach," adds Mr Rose, "telling us and our political leaders it is 'next practice' and to be brave."

As for the future, Mr Bains says: "We hope to have the support of this network to challenge politicians and decision-makers in Birmingham to ensure that a wider systems-thinking approach is continued, rather than reverting back to silo working."



Steven Rose interview Director of Insight at The Active Wellbeing Society (TAWS)

How was VITAL CITIES important for Birmingham?

VITAL CITIES has had a profound effect and impact. It has created a network of shared purpose across the wider city council, from planning and transport to health and environment. It has helped open doors that hitherto were shut. It has also given us many great ideas or simply the confidence to pursue our own, knowing there is peer support. Some of the URBACT tools – like the deep dive – are really great and we use them all the time in community engagement or strategy approaches. The network of peers we are now part of is amazing too. It feels like a shared-purpose community.

What inspiration did you draw from partner cities?

They gave us confidence to act – reassuring us we were on the right track. The honest feedback was so valuable. Doing deep dives abroad, and bringing home lessons and experiences, was so inspiring. Often I quote the bravery of Liepāja (LV) for tackling the issue of tensions with young disadvantaged kids. And this morning I was on the phone with Burgas (BG) cooking up a climate-change-meets-wellbeing project!

What are your hopes for the future?

It's my sincere intention that TAWS will lead the VITAL CITIES movement going forward. I believe this is too important not to do. That we can continue to build the network and spread practice in the existing network but importantly beyond. In short I'd recommend the URBACT programme to anyone. If you jump in with both feet, an open heart and an open mind it will be exhilarating and very rewarding.

HOW LOCAL ORGANIC FARMS ARE FEEDING SCHOOLCHILDREN AND JOBS

Key information

- Location: **Pays des Condruses (Belgium)**
- Population: **30 000**
- Involved in URBACT network: **AGRI-URBAN**
- More information: <http://urbact.eu/agri-urban>



Pays des Condruses already had a local development strategy — with plans including locally-sourced school food, and a farmers’ ‘Food Hub’. Joining URBACT AGRI-URBAN Network strengthened such actions for local, sustainable agri-business and healthy eating, while connecting local actors across the territory like never before.



Learning from Mouans-Sartoux's BioCanteens Good Practice

In the east Belgian countryside, seven municipalities got together in 2009 to form the LEADER-funded Local Action Group Pays des Condruses, an area that thrives on the milk and meat produced by its thousands of cattle. The Local Action Group promoted short supply chains, local products, and innovation in sustainable agriculture — in line with its territorial development plans. “This economic development strategy simply aims to create jobs in a sector that is losing workers every year, and create productivity on our territory,” says Local Action Group President Eric Lomba.

Meanwhile, a regional drive for a ‘Wallon food system’ was encouraging more integrated, sustainable food production and consumption.

It was against this backdrop that Pays des Condruses joined ten other urban-rural municipalities in AGRI-URBAN to rethink agri-food. Jean-François Pecheur, Local Action Group Pays des Condruses Director recalls, “The themes we already covered seemed to fit just right with this European project.”

“Food connects us all to our cities, our land and our future”

In 2016 the partners of the network signed a ‘local food policy and employment in small and medium sized European cities’ manifesto. And, over the next two years, Pays des Condruses built a holistic, locally-driven Integrated Action Plan to create jobs, preserve the land and improve health.



AGRI-URBAN team in Pays des Condruses



Land and support for budding farmers

“The main challenge for Pays des Condruses was to make its many initiatives, and the actors who pilot them, collaborate and amplify their existing ecosystem, through new markets, new services, etc, stimulating innovation,” says AGRI-URBAN Expert Miguel Sousa. The results went far beyond what was expected (see box).

Voyages of discovery

An URBACT Local Group met every two months, pooling ideas from 56 citizens, farmers, craftspeople, training and cultural associations, politicians, and development specialists. They discussed events and visibility; community cooking; local currency; agro-ecology; and coordination. Some met their European counterparts, including one cook who visited kitchens in Sweden and France.

In fact, transnational learning was an AGRI-URBAN highlight. Södertälje (SE) showed how it was developing new local products with businesses, such as chickpea falafels, and a certain barley to replace rice. Cherry-exporting Fundão (PT) shared marketing tips, encouraging the Local Action Group to promote their own territory better.

Healthy, local school food

One partner, Mouans-Sartoux (FR), had 20 years of experience with public canteens and organic food. The

Local Action Group sent a delegation over, inspiring better recipes, food preparation and waste management in their own new bio-canteens. “Thanks to AGRI-URBAN we used our partners’ experience to improve our work and gain time in implementation,” says Mr Pecheur.

An association ‘Devenirs’ now supplies locally-sourced, mostly organic, meals in nine Pays des Condruses schools. ‘Devenirs’ educates children, weighs leftovers, adjusts menus, and is reducing foodwaste from 30% to 10%. Five more schools are set to benefit by 2021, with the long-term goal of supplying 1000 meals per day — depending on funding.

Pays de Condruses’ Integrated Action Plan includes professionalisation schemes to meet growing demands for organic food. One is the region’s first market gardening ‘incubator’ providing crops, land, technical support, and training, to prepare future independent growers.

“Thanks to AGRI-URBAN we used our partners’ experience to improve our work and gain time in implementation.”

Jean-François Pecheur

Travel for extra ideas

“We visited Mouans-Sartoux (FR) with an elected representative and the following idea was born: to test giving schoolchildren soup during the morning break and fruit in the afternoon, in addition to the usual hot meal at midday. This meant healthy, local food all day!” says Mr Pecheur. After a trial period in May-June 2018, the idea was kept.

“URBACT enabled us to ask ourselves questions locally, improve our strategy, tackle new challenges,” adds Mr Pecheur. “At European level it helped us open our minds, discover innovative practices - and opportunities like Erasmus+. It made us look at ourselves and say ‘we do that already, but we could do it better’.”



Jean-Francois Pecheur highlights five URBACT-driven changes:

- 1 URBACT helped put bio-canteens on the political agenda, from close to nothing. It will become a real question of governance for years to come. We’ll present the Integrated Action Plan to municipal councils in 2018. Next, we’ll propose a policy for adjusting school lunch tariffs with parents’ incomes.
- 2 The URBACT Local Group brought us closer to project leaders and entrepreneurs. For example, we met ice-cream makers and decided to develop a territorial brand for their products. We agreed on a charter, working with raw milk from farms on our territory. Five local icecream makers now use the label, gaining recognition for their fresh, local products.
- 3 Market gardeners and cheese sellers who met in the URBACT group now sell their products together at town markets.
- 4 We already wanted to develop an agricultural FabLab, but Fundão showed how it could be part of a broader, economic approach. The FabLab will offer digital tools to create and repair agro-equipment and package products, as well as professional training and other services.
- 5 The idea of agro-ecology and a ‘holistic’ approach to development at territorial level, working according to cycles, respecting nature, came from our URBACT Local Group. It’s a large-scale project we hope to start in 2022 with LEADER funding.

LOCAL PRODUCTS + HEALTHY FOOD = HAPPY CHILDREN: FUNDÃO'S FIRST FOOD POLICY

Key information

Location: **Fundão (Portugal)**

Population: **29 000**

Involved in URBACT network: **AGRI-URBAN**

More information: <http://urbact.eu/agri-urban>



Fundão has long been a source of good food and wine. Facing a shrinking population, this municipality in central Portugal created an export-focused Producers' Club in 2012, winning prizes from Abu Dhabi to Macau. But the city joined the URBACT AGRI-URBAN Network to seek for local, sustainable solutions: Producers and consumers helped build a plan to serve local, organic food in public canteens, boosting Fundão's economy — and healthy reputation.

Micaela Gil, Fundão municipality's European Project Manager, discovered AGRI-URBAN while browsing the URBACT project ideas database: "As an urban-rural area, we were looking for new solutions, new knowledge. We wanted to explore short circuits of production and consumption, job creation for young people in agriculture, public procurement... So we contacted Baena (ES), the Lead Partner of the network, and were accepted — from more than seventy towns!"

Fundão joined ten other small and medium cities in AGRI-URBAN to improve agri-food markets and link producers with local communities. Recognising the economic, health and environmental benefits, their mayors and representatives gathered in Mollet del Vallès (ES) in June 2016 to sign a 'local food policy and employment' manifesto, each committing to build an Integrated Action Plan.

A plan full of actions

After two years studying and sharing good practices with partner cities, and monthly meetings with a new 'local action group' of farms, schools, universities, canteen suppliers, public offices and associations (URBACT Local Group), Fundão published its 2018-2020 action plan.

Implementation started immediately. A local 'short circuit territory' was defined using Portugal's delimitations for direct sale. And — inspired by Pays des Condruces (BE) — Fundão interviewed local producers, creating a database of farmers and their produce.

"Results went far beyond expectations," says AGRI-URBAN Expert Miguel Sousa. "When starting the network, Fundão didn't have a food policy, but now they do, and they're even



Fundão produces cherries, chestnuts, peaches, grapes, olive oil and cheese

implementing it in school canteens. Backing healthy food with local and organic products has created new dynamics in the city."

The best place to see this is Silvares primary school at lunchtime, where children are devouring healthy soup, main courses and dessert. Because it has its own kitchen, cooks, and suppliers, the local action group chose this school as a small-scale pilot — laying the ground for all primary schools to serve fruit and vegetables that are 10% organic and 80% local, by summer 2019. This means a total of 735 meals daily in 29 schools: two supplied by private businesses, and 26 by private institutions with a social solidarity remit.



"URBACT is brilliant because it allows small and medium towns to access and learn from European good practices."

Micaela Gil

Using selection criteria like quality and variety rather than price alone — with public procurement experience from Mollet del Vallès (ES) — the school contracted 'Bio Eco' as their main suppliers. The association of 11 local, certified organic farms, providing fruit, vegetables, honey and cheese, was created in 2018. They sell at local markets, and help farmers go organic. "Bio Eco is one of many good surprises helping this project along the way," says Ms Gil. Others include national decisions supporting organic farming and vegetarian meals (2017), and moves towards giving municipalities more control over college food.

When the children finish eating, they empty leftovers into buckets — trying to throw away less than their friends. Uneaten food is then weighed, and orders adjusted. "It helps show that moving to locally produced organic food isn't more expensive: Diminishing food waste reduces costs, and means you can buy produce that's a bit more expensive but of better quality," says Ms Gil.

Main inspiration: an all-organic partner

Fundão plans to increase the proportion of organic local canteen food progressively as demand — and supply — increases. The relatively low initial goal of 10% is one of many practical tips from Mouans-Sartoux (FR), where almost 100% of school canteen food is organic. Their good practice, developed over 20 years, is being transferred in the URBACT Transfer BioCanteens network.

"The advantage of learning with URBACT," says Ms Gil, "is that you get to work with partners who've already built up long experience. Mouans-Sartoux inspired us, and showed us how to develop something similar quickly in Fundão."



Lunch leftover bins reduce food waste in Silvares school

"URBACT is brilliant because it allows small and medium towns to access and learn from European good practice," says Ms Gil. "This was our first truly European experience. Through these exchanges we've become an URBACT family. We're inspired by others, while improving our own local situation."

Organic future

The Silvares pilot is showing producers, families and institutions the health and economic benefits of organic local food and reduced waste, inciting others to follow. Inspired by Södertälje's (SE) municipal Diet Unit, Fundão will provide training and information to farmers, school canteen cooks, and its 83 social infrastructures — from hospitals to retirement homes.

Fundão has applied to Interreg Sudoe to fund further actions, including a new digital platform and app with financial incentives for schools to contract local organic suppliers.

"The Municipality of Fundão's participation in AGRI-URBAN has been a unique sharing and learning experience," says Mayor Paulo Fernandes. "It's a worthwhile project that will contribute to healthier food in schools and enhance local products, but in reality we have seen an even deeper and wider impact through the potential to decisively influence the community in a change of consumption habits."



Fundão cherries: an iconic territorial brand

ACTION PLANNING NETWORKS,

ALL OVER EUROPE!

During 2014-2018, the URBACT programme has financed 20 Action-Planning networks gathering 205 partners from all over Europe. For three years, these cities and local or regional agencies have been meeting to share knowledge and to find solutions to their challenges. Thanks to the URBACT method, they have empowered local stakeholders through URBACT Local Groups to co-produce Integrated Action Plans. More than 66% of these URBACT cities had their Integrated Action Plan approved, nearly 50% secured funding for it, and more than 80% of them have already started implementing it.

The list of these networks, their partners, main outputs and websites are presented in these two pages.

NETWORK	DESCRIPTION
2nd Chance	Rehabilitation of old, abandoned or underused buildings and sites for the benefit of a sustainable neighbourhood development based on common goods.
AGRI-URBAN	Rethinking agrifood production in small and medium-sized cities in the light of new trends resulting in new opportunities for the labour market, SMEs development and the urban-rural linkage.
ARRIVAL CITIES	Managing rapid change in the population structure and interactions between individuals and social groups in cities in relation to the growing migrant population.
BoostInno	Improving the capacities of public administrations to boost social innovation ecosystems through participation, open innovation and entrepreneurship.
CHANGE!	Establishing a collaborative public service model in order to meet the increasing public expectations, societal challenges and financial shortages.
CityCentreDoctor	Bringing innovation in the centres of smaller cities to retain local population, attract businesses and create employment.
CityMobilNet	Facing major problems of urban mobility by empowering cities to develop sustainable urban mobility strategies in a comprehensive and co-productive process for a time scope of 10-15 years.
Freight TAILS	Addressing the challenges posed by rapidly increasing freight movements within the context of all urban logistics and stimulating the low-carbon urban freight sector.
GEN-Y City	Supporting creative and innovative entrepreneurs from Generation Y by developing tailor-made forms of cooperation between science, local government and business.
In Focus	Developing better and more efficient urban policies in order to facilitate the identification and capturing of new emerging sectorial opportunities and create smart specialisation strategies.
INTERACTIVE CITIES	Exploring how digital, social media and user-generated content can improve today's urban management in European cities, regardless of size.
MAPS	Renewal and sustainable management of dismissed military areas in urban environments to foster social inclusion, cohesion and accessibility.
Procure	Exploring how to harness the spending power through procurement to bring benefits for businesses and people and have a positive impact on the city and its local economy.
REFILL	Exploring the practice of temporary use of vacant sites to identify its long-lasting effects and the way in which it influences local governments in planning and decision-making processes.
RESILIENT EUROPE	Increasing the city's resilience and successfully delivering on its potential for progress using a transition management approach.
RetailLink	Fostering the revitalisation of the retail sector in medium-sized cities through innovative retail strategies that will enhance the competitiveness of small and/or independent retail businesses.
SmartImpact	Deploying smart city technologies and solutions at a district level as a mechanism to help secure opportunities and remain competitive.
sub>urban	Increasing the density within the city borders instead of expanding the urban territory by uncovering new planning practices, processes, instruments and partnerships.
TechTown	Exploring how small and medium-sized cities can maximise the job creation potential of the digital economy and how businesses can access the digital skills needed to grow and compete.
VITAL CITIES	Using innovative urban design and planning tools for redesigning public spaces for recreation services and breaking down barriers to participation within the less active and the deprived population.

CITY PARTNERS	WEBSITES	RELATED STORIES
Naples (IT), Dubrovnik (HR), Maribor (SI), Lublin (PL), Chemnitz (DE), Brussels (BE), Caen (FR), Liverpool (UK), Gijon (ES), Porto (PT), Genoa (IT).	http://urbact.eu/2nd-chance	p.38, 40
Baena (ES), Fundão (PT), Monmouthshire (UK), Pays des Condruses (BE), Södertälje (SE), Jelgava (LV), Petrinja (HR), Pylä (EL), Cesena (IT), Mouans-Sartoux (FR), Mollet del Valles (ES).	http://urbact.eu/agri-urban	p.86, 88
Amadora (PT), Val-de-Marne (FR), Oldenburg (DE), Dresden (DE), Riga (LV), Vantaa (FI), Thessaloniki (EL), Patras (EL), Messina (IT), Roquetas de Mar (ES).	http://urbact.eu/arrival-cities	p.70, 72
Gdansk (PL), Wrocław (PL), Baia Mare (RO), Milan (IT), Turin (IT), Barcelona (ES), Braga (PT), Paris (FR), Strasbourg (FR), Skåne (SE).	http://urbact.eu/boostinno	p.74, 76
Eindhoven (NL), Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown (IE), Amarante (PT), Forlì (IT), Nagykanizsa (HU), Riga (LV), Gdansk (PL), Skåne (SE), Aarhus (DK).	http://urbact.eu/change	p.78, 80
San Donà di Piave (IT), Idrija (SI), Petrinja (HR), Valašské Meziříčí (CZ), Radlin (PL), Naas (IE), Heerlen (NL), Nort-sur-Erdre (FR), Amarante (PT), Medina del Campo (ES).	http://urbact.eu/citycentredoctor	p.18, 20
Bielefeld (DE), Burgos (ES), Braga (PT), Morne-a-l'Eau (FR), Aix Marseille Provence (FR), Palermo (IT), South East Region (MT), Agii Anargyri Kamatero (EL), Zadar (HR), Slatina (RO), Gdansk (PL).	http://urbact.eu/citymobilnet	p.10, 12
Westminster (UK), Brussels (BE), Maastricht (NL), Gdynia (PL), La Rochelle (FR), Parma (IT), Split (HR), Suceava (RO), Tallinn (EE), Umea (SE).	http://urbact.eu/freight-tails	p.14, 16
Poznań (PL), Bologna (IT), Genoa (IT), Sabadell (ES), Granada (ES), Coimbra (PT), Nantes (FR), Wolverhampton (UK), Kristiansand (NO), Klaipeda (LT), Daugavpils (LV), Torun (PL).	http://urbact.eu/gen-y-city	p.22, 24
Bilbao (ES), Porto (PT), Plasencia (ES), Ostrava (CZ), Bucharest (RO), Bielsko Biala (PL), Frankfurt (DE), Bordeaux (FR), Grenoble (FR), Turin (IT).	http://urbact.eu/in-focus	p.26, 28
Genoa (IT), Debrecen (HU), Palermo (IT), Varna (BG), Alba Iulia (RO), Tartu (EE), Ghent (BE), Paris (FR), Lisbon (PT), Murcia (ES).	http://urbact.eu/interactive-cities	p.62, 64
Piacenza (IT), Serres (EL), Varazdin (HR), Szombathely (HU), Telšiai (LT), Koblenz (DE), Longford (IE), Espinho (PT), Cartagena (ES).	http://urbact.eu/maps	p.50, 52
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Ghent (BE), Nantes (FR), Athens (EL), Cluj-Napoca (RO), Ostrava (CZ), Poznań (PL), Riga (LV), Helsinki (FI), Bremen (DE), Amersfoort (NL).	http://urbact.eu/refill	p.46, 48
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Manchester (UK), Dublin (IE), Porto (PT), Guadalajara (ES), Zagreb (HR), Smolyan (BG), Suceava (RO), Miskolc (HU), Stockholm (SE), Eindhoven (NL).	http://urbact.eu/smartimpact	p.34, 36
Antwerp (BE), Barcelona (ES), Casoria (IT), Solin (HR), Baia Mare (RO), Vienna (AU), Brno (CZ), Oslo (NO), Dusseldorf (DE).	http://urbact.eu/sub.urban	p.42, 44
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Loule (PT), Rieti (IT), Šibenik (HR), Burgas (BG), Budapest (HU), Krakow (PL), Usti Nad Labem (CZ), Liepāja (LV), Vestfold County (NO), Birmingham (UK).	http://urbact.eu/vital-cities	p.82, 84



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