

PROJECT IDEA URBACT IV

ACTION PLANNING NETWORKS FOR INTEGRATED ACTION PLANS

MAIN THEME: Ecological transition and sustainable mobility in the urban environment

Lead Partner: Faenza (Emilia-Romagna, Italy)

<https://www.comune.faenza.ra.it/>



URBACT IV (2021 - 2027) will continue to support cities working on integrated and sustainable urban development through the cooperation of the EU and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The existing types of networks will again be:

- Action Planning Networks to develop local integrated action plans to improve their cities.
- Transfer Networks where cities will understand, adapt and reuse a labeled good practice in their context.
- Innovation Transfer Mechanism where cities will develop investment plans for initiatives implemented under the Urban Innovative Actions and European Urban Initiative projects.

URBACT IV networks will continue to cover a wide range of urban issues, from which cities will be able to choose. However, it is very much appreciated that the cross-cutting themes of the program will be taken into account in the process: green, gender, digital. Naturally, URBACT's capacity building and capitalization activities, as well as flagship events, will continue until 2027.

Proposed Topic:

Having analyzed the priorities of the European urban agenda, endorsed with the Amsterdam pact (2016), the New Leipzig Charter (2020) and of the URBACT program, and having analyzed the strategic opportunities of the program, it is proposed to explore the following main theme:

Green Mobility – Green Communities

Inspired by the principles of smart and green transformation of mobility in Europe, defined in the "Pact of Amsterdam" (2016), it is proposed to constitute a network formed by 8 to 9 European territorial entities connecting rural cores to work together in planning actions that transform mobility. This network seeks to balance economic and social growth, implementing a sustainable model that takes into account the well-being of future generations.

This consortium of cities is optimal for small-sized cities of between 10,000 and 60,000 inhabitants, serving rural areas and representing small economic and public centers, and is an ideal option for working collaboratively towards a more sustainable and greener future for mobility in Europe. The network of territorial entities will seek a constant dialogue between urban and rural to achieve these sustainable mobility objectives.

These cities face a challenge of providing services to small rural communities that are facing challenges as ageing, depopulation or the difficulties of women conciliation of work and family life. These rural capitals should offer a better connection and opportunities to be more accessible and affordable. In this sense, and in relation to the European Cohesion Policy objectives, we are launching this Action Planning Network.

This project on inter- and intra-urban green mobility seeks to be a key pillar in the EU strategy for a green transition in mobility, facilitating the achievement of its objective to reduce polluting emissions in transport by 90% in 2050, as described in the "Sustainable and Intelligent Mobility Strategy" (2020). Furthermore, this project is part of the EU's objective to promote more sustainable and efficient mobility in cities and urban centers, in accordance with the European Urban Agenda (2016), endorsed in the aforementioned Pact of Amsterdam.

The EU has also encouraged the participation of local and regional entities in the "Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy" (2018), which aims to improve urban mobility and support cities in implementing sustainable solutions. This URBACT project will contribute to the achievement of the purposes of this pact, promoting green mobility in urban centers and working with European territorial entities to achieve a greener and more sustainable future for mobility.

The URBACT project we propose is an important step towards a more sustainable and resilient future for urban-rural mobility. We focus on driving green mobility solutions that contribute to both social welfare and socio-economic development opportunities for citizens.

These sustainable mobility solutions should not only be limited to the implementation of new green infrastructure, but should also include a transformation in the way public transport services are configured. It is essential to promote the use of environmentally friendly modes of transport, such as bicycles, electric vehicles or mass transit with zero-emission technology, with the aim of reducing the carbon footprint and improving air quality. In addition, it is important to ensure an accessible and efficient public transport service that provides citizens with a viable alternative to polluting private means of transportation.

The combination of these factors will contribute to creating a more sustainable and environmentally friendly future for mobility in Europe. With this approach, we seek not only to improve people's quality of life, but also to strengthen the capacity of cities to withstand and adapt to future challenges. By driving sustainable solutions in all dimensions, we are building a more resilient global model of society for generations to come.

The project's lead city, Faenza, has demonstrated its commitment to sustainability and long-term urban development with its ambitious Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (2017-2030). This plan not only focuses on transforming intra-municipal forms of transportation, but also the entire Romagna Faenzina region. Moreover, with its urban-rural focus, Faenza has the opportunity to provide best practices in strategic solutions for connecting regional capitals and municipalities in its urban catchment area through sustainable and efficient routes. This plan demonstrates its long-term vision and determination to improve the quality of life of its residents and protect the environment for future generations.

The URBACT program gives the cities participating in the network the opportunity to collaborate and learn from each other for more than 2.5 years on issues related to sustainable mobility. With this program, cities in the network will have the opportunity to explore innovative solutions to mobility challenges in urban contexts, through visits to similar realities in Europe, and develop integrated strategies with an approach based on citizen participation and peer-to-peer learning. In addition, the program offers an improvement in the technical capacities of the participating cities, as well as increased experience and results that will enable them to apply for future EU funding opportunities.

This process will be 70% co-financed by URBACT and supported by experts from the program. Although the URBACT program is financed by the European Regional Development Fund, it is a cooperation program that does not finance physical actions, but rather finances the cooperation process and the development of technical documents (reports, strategies, technical development of project ideas, etc.) for 30 months. These technical documents will serve as a valuable argument for future European grants and innovative policies.