

RE-GEN JOURNAL #3

Public space regeneration through integrated urban sports' hubs for the participation of young citizen.

A Journey in Urban Regeneration and Youngsters Participation

This summer, Re-Gen partners embarked on an ambitious journey to test diverse solutions for regenerating public spaces with and for young people. By integrating street sports, food, music, and recreational activities, the initiatives focused on enhancing well-being and fostering inclusion, especially for adolescents. These efforts placed youngsters at the center of participatory processes, exploring how public spaces can be identified, mapped, revitalized, and made more engaging through sports, music and placemaking. The tests assessed whether street sports resonate with local youth, if schools can serve as channels for boosting adolescent participation, and how urban sport hubs activities can improve both the quality of public spaces and young people's health and wellbeing. The goal was to understand how cities can become more adolescent-friendly, with vibrant, inclusive, and active public spaces tailored to their needs.

TESTING SOLUTIONS IN RE-GEN CITIES

Each city in the Re-Gen network has carried out diverse testing actions, sharing experiences and insights with one another to better refine the specific goals of the upcoming action plan. This plan will be developed in the coming months and implemented beyond the life

of the Re-Gen project. In this session, we explore at least one testing action from each city, posing the question "What if...?" as a starting point for imagining new possibilities for urban regeneration and youth engagement.



TESTING ACTIONS IN **ALBACETE** | SPAIN

ALBACETE

WHAT IF WE MAP PUBLIC SPACES FOR REGENERATION AMPLIFYING THE PERSPECTIVES OF YOUNGSTERS

What was the scope of the test?

The primary goal was to engage teenagers in Albacete's urban regeneration process by using digital tools to map public spaces they frequent. Young participants were encouraged not only to identify areas in need of improvement but also to share their ideas on transforming these spaces into vibrant, youth-friendly environments. This initiative aimed to ensure that future investments align closely with the needs and desires of Albacete's young residents.

What did we do concretely?

The local youth center, as part of the Urban Local Group (ULG), proposed leveraging digital tools and youth-friendly media—photos, videos, and social networks—to engage teenagers in a meaningful way. This led to an Instagram contest where young people were invited to capture photos or videos in their favorite public spaces and suggest ideas for their revitalization. Using the hashtag #REGENALBACETE and tagging CEEI Albacete, participants shared their entries. Top ideas and images were awarded, making this both a fun and informative exercise for identifying valuable spaces. Through this activity, the city gathered critical insights into where investments in regeneration could be best directed, particularly for outdoor sports areas and gathering spots that appeal to the youth.

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Youth Engagement through Digital Tools:** The test highlighted how effective digital platforms can be in reaching young people and encouraging them to share valuable insights about public spaces they frequent and value. As Paco Pérez from the Youth Centre noted, "It's a great opportunity for the young to actively participate in the city's decision-making."
- ❖ **Insights from Youth Participation:** By allowing young people to voice their opinions on regeneration needs, the city gained a deeper understanding of the specific features and activities they desire, including spaces for social gatherings and sports.
- ❖ **Enhanced Sense of Involvement:** Feedback from participants showed that young people felt more engaged and interested in urban planning when invited to contribute ideas directly. As one teenager remarked, "I just want to know what I have to do or where to look to participate because me and my friends would love to be part of it."

How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Prioritize Youth-Identified Public Space Enhancements:** Leveraging insights from the Instagram contest, Albacete's IAP will focus on areas frequently identified by youth. Enhancements will include designing parks, sports areas, and relaxation zones, informed by youth suggestions to ensure spaces align with their usage patterns.
- ❖ **Create Digital Feedback Mechanisms:** Building on the success of digital engagement, the IAP will establish channels for ongoing feedback through social media or dedicated platforms. This allows youth to continually contribute ideas and adjustments as spaces evolve, keeping public areas relevant and engaging.
- ❖ **Encourage Artistic and Cultural Expression in Public Spaces:** The IAP will emphasize incorporating youth-driven art projects, such as murals or temporary installations, allowing for ongoing expression and personalization of spaces, as demonstrated in Albacete's digital campaign.
- ❖ **Support Flexible Urban Spaces with Community Partnerships:** To maintain and evolve public spaces based on youth input, Albacete will formalize partnerships with community organizations, ensuring these spaces meet long-term needs and are adaptable for various events or recreational uses.

Albacete's testing actions underscore the power of digital engagement, showing that by listening to youth perspectives, the city can create revitalized, inclusive public spaces that resonate with the aspirations of its younger generation.

Where: Albacete, Spain

Urban Context: Citywide

Type of Test: Digital engagement via social media, involving youth in mapping public spaces in need of regeneration and gathering their ideas for revitalization.

TESTING ACTIONS IN ALBACETE | SPAIN

¡TU IDEA, NUESTRO SILO!

COMO PARTICIPAR

1. SACA UNA SELFIE O FOTO EN EL SILO ABANDONADO JUNTO CON UNA BREVE NOTA DESCRIBIENDO TU IDEA DE CÓMO DEBERÍAMOS REGENERAR LA ZONA.
2. PUBLICA EN INSTAGRAM CON EL HASHTAG #REGENALBACETE
3. COMPARTE TU PUBLICACIÓN CON LA CUENTA DEL CEEI ALBACETE.

¡PREMIOS PARA LAS 10 MEJORES IDEAS!

PARA JOVENES (10 - 18 AÑOS)

HASTA 30 DE OCTUBRE

MAS INFORMACIÓN >

TESTING ACTIONS IN DAUGAVPILS | LATVIA

DAUGAVPILS

WHAT IF WE USE
SPORT TO
REGENERATE PUBLIC
SPACES AND ENGAGE
YOUNG PEOPLE

What was the scope of the test?

The test aimed to explore how sports and recreation, when designed with youth in mind, can become powerful tools for regenerating public spaces and fostering community cohesion. The city of Daugavpils recognized that adolescents often feel disconnected from urban development processes and that many public spaces are underutilized by this age group. There are a lot of activities organized for youth, but there are not larger scale events, where sport, music and youth engagement play a crucial role altogether and what is happening not in the city center, but in different neighbourhoods of the city. The goal was to engage young people directly, using sports and recreational activities to transform these spaces into vibrant hubs of social interaction and physical activity.

Organizing events that incorporated street sports, music, and interactive activities, the test sought to see whether these initiatives could bridge the gap between young people and urban spaces, making these areas not only more attractive but also more inclusive. Involving adolescents in the decisionmaking process, from designing sports hubs to participating in events, was seen as key to making the regeneration sustainable and relevant to their needs. This approach was based on the idea that public spaces shaped by their users are more likely to be actively used, maintained, and valued by the community

What did we do concretely?

Daugavpils organized a series of youth-centered events to put this vision into practice:

- ❖ **Youth Summer Festival** (June 2, July 6, August 3, 2024): A multi-phase event that included basketball, football, floorball, and other sports competitions, along with music and entertainment such as live rock bands and quizzes. These events took place at key venues like a square near the Daugavpils Olympic Centre (June 2), the Daugavpils Athletics Stadium (July 6), and the Stropi Lake neighborhood (August 3). The festival aimed to bring together young people from across the city, encouraging them to engage with public spaces in new and exciting ways.
- ❖ **Engagement and Co-Creation:** Youth were actively involved in co-designing sports hubs, offering their input on how public spaces should be transformed. Through workshops and public events, they provided ideas that were directly incorporated into the planning of new facilities.
- ❖ **Partnership Development** (July 24, 2024): A newly constructed multifunctional sports ground was opened in collaboration with external foundations, providing facilities for streetball, football, floorball, volleyball, and more. This project not only revitalized a public area but also created a space specifically designed to cater to youth needs, promoting outdoor sports and social interaction.

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Youth Engagement in Urban Spaces:** The test highlighted the importance of involving young people in the process of designing and managing public spaces. Adolescents were eager to share their ideas and engage with the process, demonstrating that they want to be part of shaping their environment. Their involvement provided valuable insights into what makes spaces attractive and functional for their age group, such as the importance of accessibility, safety, and the inclusion of social elements like seating areas and gathering spots. This process also showed that when young people are involved in the creation of public spaces, they are more likely to use and care for them.
- ❖ **Community Building Through Sports:** The events demonstrated that sports can be a powerful tool for building community and bridging social divides. Sports events brought together young people from different backgrounds, fostering a sense of camaraderie and teamwork. The combination of competitions, music, and social activities created a lively, positive atmosphere that attracted large numbers of participants and spectators, showing that sports can be a central element in regenerating public spaces.
- ❖ **Sustainability of Public Spaces:** One of the key takeaways from the test was that young people are more likely to maintain and take care of public spaces that they feel ownership over. The involvement of youth in the design and management of sports hubs not only made the spaces more appealing to their peers but also encouraged a sense of responsibility. The multifunctional sports ground, co-created with youth input, became a prime example of how public-private partnerships can successfully regenerate urban areas. This model of co-management could be replicated in other parts of the city to ensure the long-term sustainability of public spaces.

How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Expand Accessible Sports and Recreation Spaces:** Building on the success of the youth summer festival, which combined sports with community activities, the IAP will prioritize creating accessible sports areas and urban hubs. This involves ensuring these areas meet the needs identified during the festival, including more versatile spaces that appeal to diverse youth interests.
- ❖ **Embed Youth-Led Programming:** Daugavpils' experience highlighted the value of programs co-designed with young people. Integrating youth councils and regular feedback loops into the IAP will help sustain this model, ensuring that spaces and activities reflect young residents' preferences.
- ❖ **Develop Intergenerational and Cultural Programming:** The festival demonstrated a strong potential for intergenerational participation in sports and recreational events. The IAP will incorporate events that continue to bridge cultural and age divides, promoting a cohesive community environment.
- ❖ **Establish Partnerships for Long-Term Sustainability:** Drawing on collaborations formed during testing, the IAP will focus on partnerships with local schools, sports associations, and NGOs to maintain and program these spaces, ensuring continued relevance and support for youth-focused activities.



Daugavpils' approach to combining sports and community engagement has proven effective in bridging social gaps and encouraging sustainable use of public spaces, ensuring that regeneration efforts truly serve and empower the city's youth.

Where: Daugavpils, Latvia

Urban Context: Citywide, with a focus on different neighborhoods

Type of Test: Organizing youth-centric sport and recreation events in public spaces, combined with digital engagement to explore new uses and community involvement

TESTING ACTIONS IN DAUGAVPILS | LATVIA

**JAUNIEŠŪ
VASARA**

DAUGAVPILS
VALSTSPILSĒTAS
PAŠVALDĪBA

1. POSMS

**DAUGAVPILĪ
2. JŪNIJĀ**

DOC APKĀRTNE, STADIONA IELA 1
SĀKUMS PLKST. 11.00

IELU BASKETBOLS **FUTBOLS**
FLORBOLS ORIENTĒŠANĀS
UNO **MŪZIKA** QUIZ

TRAŠĪE VIENI

VAIRĀK INFORMĀCIJAS
WWW.DAUGAVPILS.LV/SPORTS

ATBALSTA **Regula** **NORTEKS** **Balcia** **Top food** **isostar** **WAKE UP** **LATVIAN**

URBACT Co-funded by the European Union Interreg

TESTING ACTIONS IN DOBRICH | BULGARIA

DOBRICH

WHAT IF WE TURN AN
ABANDONED SPORTS
GROUND INTO A
VIBRANT COMMUNITY
HUB FOR SPORTS,
CULTURE, AND
INTERGENERATIONAL
ENGAGEMENT

What was the scope of the test?

The test aimed to transform the underutilized sports ground into a multifunctional public space for youth and community activities, bringing together different generations and social groups. The project focused on engaging teenagers through sports as a vehicle for social interaction, healthy lifestyles, and community-building, while also involving them in the planning process through online surveys and events. By aligning with the goals of the URBACT Re-Gen program, the test sought to use sports to drive the cultural and physical regeneration of the area, transforming it into a sustainable hub for youth engagement and public use.

In addition to sports, the initiative aimed to create a sense of ownership and pride among young people and local residents by involving them in decision-making and co-management of the space. The regeneration of this area also focused on inclusivity and environmental awareness, connecting with the adjacent Apple Eco Park project, which promotes nature and volunteer engagement.

What did we do concretely?

- ❖ **Apple Sport Festival (June, 2024):** Organized by the municipality in collaboration with the local Basketball Club Unstoppable, this event included a variety of sports activities such as street basketball and relay games. Over 100 young participants, aged 10 to 18, took part, celebrating the end of the school year with competitive and team games. This festival served as a test event to gather youth input on how they would like to see the space transformed.
- ❖ **Online Questionnaire:** An online survey was launched, allowing youngsters to scan a QR code to provide feedback and ideas for future events and uses for the space. This ensured that the voices of those who couldn't attend in person were still included in the planning process. More than 160+ youngsters filled out the questionnaire, offering valuable insights into how the space could be regenerated.
- ❖ **Integration of National and URBACT Funding:** we tested the possibility to integrate funds and projects. Indeed Part of the regeneration of the sports ground is supported by a combination of URBACT Re-Gen program planning actions and national funding from the "Clean Environment 2024" program, under which the municipality secured €7,600. This funding allowed the integration of two connected projects: the "Apple Eco Park" initiative, which focuses on greening and environmental education, and the Re-Gen project, which emphasizes youth engagement and sports-based regeneration. Together, these funding sources helped create a comprehensive approach to public space revitalization, ensuring that both environmental sustainability and youth needs are addressed in tandem.

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Youth Participation is Key to Success:** Engaging young people in both the sports festival and the online survey demonstrated that they are eager to participate in shaping their environment. Their feedback on activities and space design was crucial in identifying how to make the space more attractive and functional for future use.
- ❖ **Sports as a Tool for Community Building:** The Apple Sport Festival showed that sports can successfully bring together different age groups and social backgrounds. The event fostered a sense of community and inclusion, illustrating the potential of sports to create a more cohesive social fabric within the neighborhood.
- ❖ **Digital Engagement Enhances Inclusivity:** The use of digital tools, such as the QR code survey, allowed for broader youth participation and ensured that those unable to attend the physical event could still contribute their ideas. This approach can be replicated in future projects to maintain ongoing dialogue with the community and ensure inclusive



How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Establishment of a Multifunctional Youth Hub:** Based on the success of the sports festival and the feedback from the online survey, Dobrich will develop the abandoned sports ground into a multifunctional hub for sports, cultural events, and community gatherings. This space will serve as a focal point for youth-driven activities and public engagement, helping to create a more vibrant, adolescent-friendly environment.
- ❖ **Ongoing Youth Involvement in Planning and Management:** The positive results from the digital engagement highlight the importance of keeping young people involved in the planning and management of public spaces. The municipality plans to continue using digital tools, such as online surveys and social media, to engage youth in the ongoing development and maintenance of the area.
- ❖ **Integration with Environmental Initiatives:** The synergy between the Apple Eco Park and the sports ground will be a key element of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP). By promoting environmental awareness alongside sports and community activities, Dobrich will create a sustainable and holistic approach to public space regeneration, encouraging a healthier, more active lifestyle for its residents.



Dobrich's testing has highlighted the value of combining sports and environmental initiatives, fostering a community-centered approach to public space regeneration that will inspire lasting stewardship and youth involvement

Where: Dobrich, Bulgaria

Urban Context: A disused 2000 sq.m. municipal sports ground located between three secondary schools in a densely populated residential area. The area, known as "The Apple" due to its shape, has not been maintained since the 1980s and is currently unsafe for use, though it is in a lively and communicative part of the city

Type of Test: Youth engagement through sports and cultural activities, complemented by online participation, to regenerate the abandoned space and create an adolescent-friendly environment.

TESTING ACTIONS IN **LEZHA** | ALBANIA

LEZHA

WHAT IF WE ENGAGE TEENS IN REGENERATING PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH SPORTS

What was the scope of the test?

The primary goal was to engage teenagers in creating an inclusive space that encourages physical activity and social interaction. By involving youth in the design and decision-making process for the new Youth Center, the test aimed to foster a sense of ownership and long-term commitment to the space. Additionally, this project addresses the urgent need in Lezha for recreational infrastructure, especially in areas lacking dedicated sports facilities.

What did we do concretely?

- ❖ **Youth Workshops and Consultations:** The municipality hosted sessions with local teens to gather input on the ideal layout and use of the Youth Center's spaces. Young people shared ideas for sports areas like basketball, volleyball, and indoor zones for skateboarding and martial arts, envisioning a space that adapts to varied athletic interests.
- ❖ **Stakeholder Collaboration:** Engaging with sports professionals and local organizations—including sports associations and the municipal sports department—helped shape design needs. For example, a mini-stadium with flexible seating was proposed to serve both spectators and informal gatherings, enhancing the space's multifunctional capacity.
- ❖ **Integration with Local Initiatives:** This project aligns with Lezha's Youth Strategy 2024-2027, which promotes widespread sports participation and the discovery of new athletic talent. It complements broader municipal efforts to improve health and social well-being through accessible, community-centered spaces.

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Youth-Centered Design Builds Ownership:** Including teens in the co-design process fosters a strong sense of attachment and responsibility toward the facilities, increasing the likelihood that they will care for and actively use these spaces long-term.
- ❖ **Diverse Sports Preferences Require Flexible Spaces:** Youth feedback underscored the need for adaptable sports areas that cater to both mainstream and niche activities like skateboarding and martial arts, enabling the center to evolve with changing interests.
- ❖ **Collaboration Enhances Community Investment:** By involving stakeholders—from sports organizations to city officials—the project builds a supportive network of resources, essential for sustaining the Youth Center's infrastructure and activities.



How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

The insights from this testing phase will inform Lezha’s Integrated Action Plan (IAP) by prioritizing youth-centered, flexible spaces that adapt to multiple sports and social activities. The IAP will include provisions for ongoing youth involvement, ensuring that future sports hubs and public spaces continue to reflect the interests of young people. Furthermore, the collaborative framework established during the test can be scaled up, creating partnerships that will support the maintenance and evolution of community spaces beyond the project’s timeframe.

- ❖ **Redevelop Abandoned Spaces into Multi-Use Youth Hubs:** Lezha’s IAP will prioritize the transformation of underutilized structures, like the Hydajet Lezha gymnasium, into multifunctional sports centers. These hubs will provide facilities for various sports, including football, basketball, volleyball, and fitness activities, creating accessible environments for youth engagement and community connection.
- ❖ **Expand Outdoor and Indoor Sports Facilities:** The IAP will support the construction of new outdoor and indoor sports areas, accessible to all youth, including skating and martial arts zones, as suggested by local sports professionals. This aligns with the aim of broadening recreational opportunities across Lezha, especially in neighborhoods with limited facilities.
- ❖ **Implement Regular Training Programs and Competitions:** Organized sports programs and activities led by professional coaches will be hosted in the new youth centers. These programs aim to foster skill development, improve health, and encourage widespread participation, contributing to a sustainable sports culture in Lezha.
- ❖ **Encourage Youth Participation in Governance and Decision-Making:** To ensure long-term relevance, the IAP will establish mechanisms for ongoing youth involvement in managing and planning sports hubs. Regular feedback sessions with young people and collaboration with local organizations will help adapt spaces to evolving community needs.
- ❖ **Promote Inclusivity and Talent Discovery through Sports:** Supporting the “Massification of sports” initiative, the IAP will provide diverse sports options to engage rural and urban youth, with specific outreach to underserved communities. This inclusivity approach will empower youth from varied backgrounds, fostering social cohesion and helping identify emerging talents.

<p>1. Open Space</p> <p>Open spaces in the center of the city are the most accessible and most used. They are the most flexible and can be used for many different activities. They are also the most visible and can be used for many different activities.</p>	<p>2. Sports Center</p> <p>The sports center is a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. It is a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. It is a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>3. Gymnasium</p> <p>The gymnasium is a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. It is a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. It is a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>
<p>4. Park Areas</p> <p>Park areas are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>5. Playable & Open Spaces</p> <p>Playable and open spaces are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>6. Outdoor Sports Center</p> <p>Outdoor sports centers are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>
<p>7. Sports Hubs</p> <p>Sports hubs are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>8. Youth Center</p> <p>Youth centers are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>9. Indoor Sports Center</p> <p>Indoor sports centers are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>
<p>10. Multi-Use Sports Center</p> <p>Multi-use sports centers are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>11. Youth Hub</p> <p>Youth hubs are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>12. Indoor Sports Hub</p> <p>Indoor sports hubs are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>
<p>13. Youth Center</p> <p>Youth centers are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>14. Youth Hub</p> <p>Youth hubs are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>	<p>15. Indoor Sports Hub</p> <p>Indoor sports hubs are a place where young people can go to play sports and have fun. They are a place where they can meet their friends and have fun. They are a place where they can learn new skills and improve their fitness.</p>



This initiative demonstrates the transformative impact of youth participation in shaping community spaces. By actively involving teens in the creation of sports and recreational hubs, Lezha is making public spaces more adolescent-friendly, fostering health and social cohesion. This test lays the groundwork for sustained youth engagement and community-focused development in future urban planning.

Where: Lezha, Albania

Urban Context: The Beslidhja neighborhood, which lacks accessible recreational areas for youth. This site, including the abandoned Hydajet Lezha gymnasium, is being transformed into a Youth Center featuring multiple sports facilities and social spaces

Type of Test: Co-designing sports hubs and community spaces, with local youth actively involved in shaping facilities that align with their needs and preferences

TESTING ACTIONS IN **MILANO** | ITALY

MILANO

WHAT IF WE ENGAGE TEENS IN REGENERATING PUBLIC SPACES THROUGH COLLABORATIVE DESIGN OF A SPORT CULTURAL EVENT

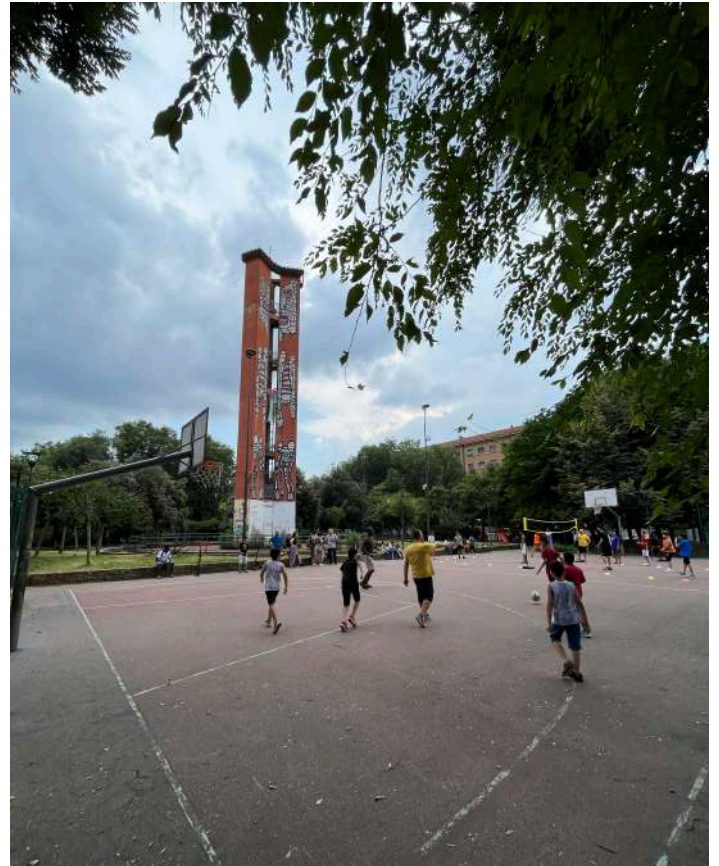
What was the scope of the test?

The primary objective was to bridge the gap between young people and public spaces by engaging them directly in creating an event that aligns with their needs. This initiative went beyond organizing a single event; it was an opportunity to empower youth in envisioning what they want for their neighborhood, understanding practical constraints, and exploring available resources. The goal was to encourage a sense of ownership in the teens while facilitating social connections across diverse backgrounds and perspectives. With input from local youth organizations, the project also focused on fostering inclusive public spaces and providing safe recreational options tailored to the needs of San Siro's younger residents.

What did we do concretely?

- ❖ **Co-Design Workshops** (March - June 2024): The project team organized a series of co-design sessions with students from the Galilei-Luxembourg secondary school and the Equa cooperative's after-school program. Through these workshops, youth participants discussed their ideas, expressed their vision for the event, and considered the logistics of making it happen. Key questions included: "What would you like to create?" and "Do we have the equipment and resources needed to achieve this?" This exercise in practical planning allowed the teens to critically evaluate possibilities while taking ownership of the project.
- ❖ **Community Sports and Social Event** (July 12, 2024): The event transformed a public square in San Siro into a vibrant, youth-centered hub, featuring areas for popular sports like football and volleyball, alongside less traditional activities like capoeira and street hockey. A "sports passport" encouraged teens to try multiple activities, fostering friendly competition and exposure to new sports. Contributions from local businesses and an interactive music station curated by participants added a personal touch, creating a welcoming space reflective of the youth's aspirations.
- ❖ **Building Partnerships and Community Ties:** Local businesses contributed snacks, and sports organizations provided resources, creating a sense of community support. These partnerships reinforced a network of ongoing resources and potential for future collaborations, fostering stronger connections between youth, businesses, and the larger San Siro community





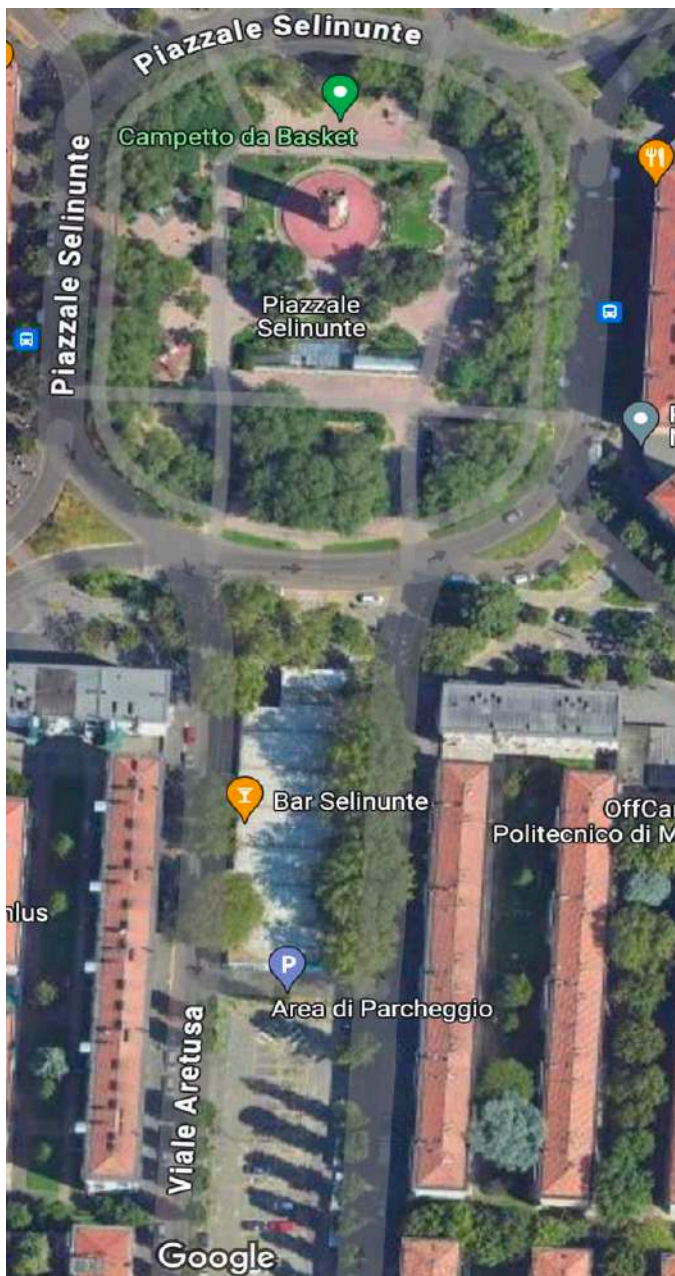
What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **The Value of Youth Participation:** Involving young people in the co-design process provided them with a sense of ownership and responsibility toward the space and event. This involvement heightened their engagement and provided insight into their needs and preferences. As one participant said, “A skatepark would be amazing, but we don’t have skateboards. Let’s focus on enhancing the basketball court and add multipurpose areas that work with what we have.” This practical mindset encouraged adaptable thinking and community-focused solutions.
- ❖ **Diverse Engagement Needs:** The testing showed that while traditional sports remained popular, certain activities like skateboarding were less attractive due to accessibility issues. This feedback will guide future programming to ensure that public spaces reflect the actual interests and capacities of local youth.
- ❖ **Fostering Inclusivity and Cross-Cultural Exchange:** The collaboration with local youth groups and organizations enabled teens from different backgrounds to share experiences, bridging social, cultural, and economic divides. Teens who lived in San Siro provided insights about the area to peers from other neighborhoods, creating a multidimensional understanding of the San Siro public spaces and its challenges. This knowledge exchange fostered a unique perspective that enriched the planning process.

How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

The testing phase highlighted the importance of inclusive and adaptable urban spaces, directly informing Milan's Integrated Action Plan (IAP). The specific objectives for the IAP include:

- ❖ **Enhancing Neighborhood Livability:** The plan will focus on creating accessible, inclusive sports and cultural initiatives within public spaces, directly informed by youth feedback and emphasizing the shared use of public areas.
- ❖ **Promoting the Role of Sports as an Educational and Growth Tool:** Leveraging sports as a tool for personal and social development aligns with Milan's broader youth strategy, where sports serve as a bridge for learning and building community bonds. Schools and local organizations will play an active role in implementing sports programs that also encourage skill development and teamwork.
- ❖ **Creating a Collective Narrative for San Siro:** The IAP aims to counter the negative stereotypes associated with the San Siro neighborhood by promoting a new narrative centered around youth empowerment, community engagement, and the role of sports in social cohesion. This reimagining of San Siro's public spaces will foster a sense of belonging and pride, inviting all residents to view the neighborhood as a cohesive, inclusive community



Milan's testing action with the Re-Gen project demonstrates the potential of engaging youth in urban planning. By empowering young people to co-design their environment, Milan is setting the foundation for a more inclusive, resilient city that reflects the needs of its residents. Through these insights, the IAP is poised to implement a sustainable and youth-driven vision for the city, transforming San Siro into a model of active, community-led regeneration.

Where: San Siro, Milan, Italy

Urban Context: San Siro neighborhood, a culturally diverse area facing social and economic challenges, where public spaces are often perceived as unsafe or lacking in recreational resources. This neighborhood has limited accessible areas for adolescents, making it an ideal setting to test youth-driven public space regeneration.

Type of Test: Engaging local youth in co-designing an event and exploring public space use through sports and cultural activities, emphasizing participation, empowerment, and community building.

SUN SIRO

12 LUGLIO
2024

Un pomeriggio di sport,
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del quartiere

URBACT



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TESTING ACTIONS IN PULA | CROATIA

PULA

WHAT IF YOUNGSTERS CO- CREATE URBAN SPORTS HUBS TO REGENERATE PUBLIC SPACES

What was the scope of the test?

The main goal was to create adolescent-friendly spaces by involving young people in designing and managing areas for sports and recreation. This initiative focused on transforming public spaces at the Rojc Community Center and Valica playground into vibrant, youth-centric hubs that encourage social interaction and reflect the local culture. By blending tactical urbanism with youth-led input, the project aimed to make these spaces inclusive, lively, and welcoming.

What did we do concretely?

- ❖ **Rojc Walk and Co-Design Workshops** (May - October 2024): Pula organized workshops to introduce local students to the Rojc Community Center and involve them in planning activities for its redevelopment. These sessions allowed young people to explore the center and brainstorm potential events and sports activities, giving them a direct role in shaping Rojc's future as a community hub.
- ❖ **Co planning of Tactical Urbanism at Valica Playground:** A hands-on urbanism project at Valica to involve local youth in painting sections of the playground wall, adding designs that resonated with them is under planning. This activity is expected to both test regeneration of public spaces with new meaning and uses and to foster a sense of belonging and responsibility, encouraging teens to see it as an extension of their community.
- ❖ **Introduction of Diverse Sports:** a process to co design an inclusivity recreational events in public space is undergoing. The main outcome is the selection of the space: the Šijana Park featuring less common sports like fencing and tai chi. We expect to provide a variety of unusual sports and to engage teens to demonstrate the potential of these sports can meet diverse youth interests.

What did we learn so far and what do we expect to learn from next actions?

- ❖ **Youth Ownership of Public Spaces:** Involving teens in the design and decoration of public areas increased their sense of responsibility and connection. Young participants reported feeling valued and were more likely to maintain and frequent the spaces they helped shape.
- ❖ **Art and Sports as Engagement Tools:** The combination of art and sports activities proved highly effective in engaging youth, providing them with opportunities to express creativity and develop pride in their community contributions.
- ❖ **The Appeal of Varied Sports Options:** Introducing lesser-known sports broadened the range of recreational activities, attracting a more diverse audience and emphasizing the need to include both mainstream and alternative sports in future planning.

How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Redevelop Urban Spaces for Youth:** The IAP will focus on converting underutilized areas, such as those around Rojc and Valica, into inclusive zones for diverse social groups. Youth involvement in the design and planning process will be a key feature, ensuring that spaces align with their needs.
- ❖ **Create Adaptable Recreational Spaces:** Pula aims to establish flexible sports facilities near schools and community centers that cater to both popular and alternative sports. This flexibility will make the spaces more accessible and welcoming to a range of youth interests and abilities.
- ❖ **Foster Cross-Departmental Collaboration:** Effective implementation will require coordinated efforts between the Social Activities, Sports, Youth, and Urban Planning departments. By integrating these perspectives, the IAP can achieve a more comprehensive and sustainable approach to youth-focused urban development.
- ❖ **Promote Youth Participation in City Planning:** Building on the engagement achieved through testing actions, Pula's IAP will encourage young people to participate in ongoing planning and decision-making processes. This will include opportunities for them to shape urban sports hubs and cultural spaces, reinforcing a model of participatory governance that benefits the entire community.

Pula showcases the potential of youth-led urban regeneration, demonstrating how art, sports, and collaborative planning can create public spaces that foster community cohesion and well-being. Moving forward, these insights will shape Pula's approach to creating vibrant, inclusive, and youth-friendly sport environments.

Where: Pula, Croatia

Urban Context: The Rojc Community Center and the Valica playground, areas frequented by youth but underutilized and in need of revitalization.

Type of Test: Engaging youngsters in tactical urbanism and the co-creation of sports events and recreational spaces.



TESTING ACTIONS IN **VERONA** | ITALY

VERONA

WHAT IF WE
TRANSFORM
ABANDONED SPACES
INTO VIBRANT, YOUTH-
DRIVEN SPORT HUBS
THROUGH
CO-DESIGN AND
PARTICIPATION

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Youth Engagement is Key:** Involving young people in the design and transformation of their environment made them feel more connected and responsible for the spaces. Their participation in street sports and co-design activities helped them see public spaces as valuable community assets rather than neglected areas. This sense of ownership is crucial for ensuring the long-term success of urban regeneration projects.
- ❖ **The Power of Sports:** Street sports proved to be an effective tool for engaging young people who might otherwise have been disconnected from social and recreational activities. Sports also provided a common ground for youth from different backgrounds, fostering a sense of belonging and community, particularly in multi-ethnic neighborhoods like Borgo Roma.
- ❖ **Co-Design as a Catalyst for Change:** The co-design workshops demonstrated that young people have a clear vision for how they want their city to look and function. By involving them in the planning process, the city can ensure that future regeneration efforts are aligned with their needs and aspirations. This approach also showed that young citizens are more likely to take care of spaces they helped design.

How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Establishment of Urban Sport Hubs:** Based on the success of the street sports experimentation, the city plans to establish dedicated sport hubs in underutilized spaces. These hubs will not only serve as areas for physical activity but also as social spaces where young people can gather and interact.
- ❖ **Continued Youth Involvement in Urban Planning:** The positive outcomes of the co-design workshops underscore the importance of keeping young people involved in the planning and management of public spaces. Future regeneration projects will continue to prioritize youth participation, ensuring that their voices are heard in the decision-making process.
- ❖ **Scaling Co-Design Programs:** Programs like Fabbrica Urbana and Conoscersi per Costruire will be expanded to include more neighborhoods, allowing a larger segment of the youth population to engage in the regeneration process. This will ensure that urban planning in Verona remains inclusive, sustainable, and youth-driven.



Verona's focus on co-design with young people is reshaping urban spaces into inclusive hubs, positioning the city as a leader in youth-friendly urban planning that fosters active participation and ownership among its younger residents.

Where: Verona, Italy

Urban Context: The neighborhoods of Santa Lucia, Golosine, and Borgo Roma, located in the southern part of the city. These areas face challenges such as youth disengagement, lack of social and cultural activities, and inadequate public spaces, particularly for younger generations.

Type of Test: Experimentation with street sports and co-design activities aimed at involving young people in the regeneration of underutilized or abandoned urban spaces

TESTING ACTIONS IN **VILA DO CONDE** | PORTUGAL

VILA DO CONDE

WHAT IF WE FOSTER
INTERGENERATIONAL
BONDS TO CO-CREATE
VIBRANT PUBLIC
SPACES

What was the scope of the test?

Testing actions took place in the Bairro das Dálias, a coastal neighborhood primarily inhabited by fishing families, and other areas within the city. This setting, with its rich cultural background, served as a foundation for cross-generational engagement and public space renewal.

The goal was to foster stronger community ties and a sense of ownership over public spaces by involving both youth and older generations in the co-design process. The initiative focused on creating multi-functional urban areas that cater to diverse interests, from sports hubs to community gathering spots, and revitalizing Bairro das Dálias. By integrating sports, social events, and collaborative design, the project aimed to promote inclusivity and cultural identity within Vila do Conde's neighborhoods.

What did we do concretely?

- ❖ **Roadshow and Community Workshops** (April - September 2024): A series of workshops brought together local associations, schools, and community leaders to discuss the needs and aspirations of residents. Influential urban planners like Abel Coentrão and José Carlos Mota participated, contributing insights that helped tailor activities to the specific context of Bairro das Dálias. These sessions ensured that diverse perspectives were considered, building a holistic vision for the neighborhood's future.
- ❖ **Neighborhood Gathering and Co-Design Event** (July 15 & September 27, 2024): Community food events in different neighborhoods created a welcoming space for discussions on public space improvements. This intergenerational gathering allowed residents to share ideas for new sports facilities and social spaces, while fostering relationships among age groups and strengthening community bonds.
- ❖ **Youth-Driven Planning Sessions:** A participatory roadshow engaged around 40 young people aged 14-18, who provided insights into their use of city spaces and suggested improvements. Their feedback emphasized the need for more sports and social infrastructure, particularly in areas removed from the city center, reflecting a desire for a more inclusive, youth-friendly Vila do Conde.

What did we learn from the test?

- ❖ **Strengthening Community through Intergenerational Engagement:** By bringing together different age groups, the testing actions fostered community bonds and a shared vision. Both youth and older residents expressed enthusiasm for a collaborative approach, as it respected the diverse needs of each group and increased a collective sense of belonging.
- ❖ **The Role of Culture in Urban Spaces:** Community members highlighted the importance of spaces that reflect local cultural identity. By incorporating traditional design elements and considering the area's fishing heritage, the project tapped into the cultural values that resonate with residents.
- ❖ **Youth-Centered Facilities with Broad Appeal:** The testing actions revealed a strong demand for adaptable sports facilities that encourage both informal and organized activities. Creating multi-use sports hubs is essential for engaging the youth, but also for fostering broader community involvement, bridging the gap between recreational and cultural spaces.



How can we translate testing outcomes into the IAP actions?

- ❖ **Design Inclusive, Multi-Functional Urban Hubs:** The IAP will prioritize creating versatile spaces in Bairro das Dálias and other neighborhoods, ensuring these hubs cater to sports, social gatherings, and cultural events. This approach respects intergenerational needs and strengthens community identity.
- ❖ **Integrate Cultural Heritage into Urban Design:** Vila do Conde's IAP will emphasize preserving and celebrating the neighborhood's cultural heritage, incorporating traditional elements that reflect the city's coastal roots and fishing community, fostering a sense of pride and place.
- ❖ **Empower Youth in Planning Processes:** By establishing regular participatory planning sessions, Vila do Conde will maintain youth involvement in ongoing urban development, fostering a generation that values civic engagement and feels connected to its city's future.
- ❖ **Expand Intergenerational Events and Workshops:** The IAP will integrate community events, such as neighborhood gatherings and food events, as regular components to strengthen intergenerational bonds and cultivate a sense of



Vila do Conde's testing actions reveal that when generations come together to co-create public spaces, they build more than just physical infrastructure—they build a resilient, inclusive community that values the contributions and needs of every age group.

Where: Vila do Conde, Portugal

Urban Context: Bairro das Dálias, a social housing area predominantly inhabited by families with fishing backgrounds, currently lacking recreational infrastructure and inclusive gathering spaces.

Type of Test: Co-designing sports and social spaces through collaboration between young residents and community members, supported by local feedback to revitalize underused areas.

Focus on Integrated Planning Tools

FROM THE TESTING ACTIONS TO IAP OVERALL LOGIC

The transition from testing small-scale actions to developing a comprehensive Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is a crucial step for cities in the Re-Gen network. This process requires structured tools and methodologies to ensure coherence and alignment with the strategic vision of creating inclusive, youth-friendly public spaces. By moving from experimentation to full-scale implementation, cities can build on lessons learned during local testing, integrating these insights into a sustainable and future-oriented framework.

The Re-Gen initiative has developed a set of planning tools specifically designed to guide cities through this transition. These tools help cities take the small-scale testing actions they have conducted—whether related to urban sports hubs, placemaking, or youth

engagement—and develop them into a strategic framework for long-term urban regeneration. By using these tools, cities can ensure their IAP is both ambitious and achievable, grounded in local realities and informed by the input of key stakeholders.

The IAP serves as the long-term roadmap for public space regeneration, particularly through the creation of youth-focused Urban Sports Hubs (USH). It builds on the insights gained from small-scale tests, ensuring that the actions planned are not only practical but also aligned with broader urban policy objectives. This structured approach ensures that cities can systematically move from isolated experiments to a cohesive strategy that can be implemented over time.

Focus on Integrated Planning Tools

THE #WEBINAR ON PLANNING TOOLS

On July 9, 2024, the Re-Gen network organized a masterclass to introduce key planning tools to its partners. Led by Re-Gen Lead Expert, the session focused on the IAP's integrated approach, emphasizing the need to connect vision, strategic objectives, and specific actions. The webinar demonstrated how cities could leverage these tools to build coherent action plans and secure the necessary resources for implementation.

Core Planning Tools for IAP Development

- ❖ **Work Breakdown Structure (WBS):** This tool allows cities to deconstruct their strategic objectives into smaller, manageable tasks. It visually breaks down the actions into work packages, making it easier to organize and track activities. The WBS ensures that all actions are aligned with the city's broader vision for youth-friendly public spaces.
- ❖ **Who Does What (WDW) Matrix:** The WDW matrix is used to assign roles and responsibilities to various stakeholders, including municipal departments, NGOs, and local youth organizations. This ensures that each action within the IAP is well-supported and that all participants understand their roles, fostering accountability and collaboration.
- ❖ **Gantt Chart:** A vital tool for scheduling, the Gantt chart provides a visual representation of the timeline for each action, from start to finish. It also identifies dependencies between actions, helping cities to monitor progress and adjust timelines as needed. This ensures that all actions are implemented on time and within budget.
- ❖ **Detailed Action Sheets:** Each action identified in the IAP is supported by a detailed action sheet, which breaks the action down into specific steps. These sheets include information on resources, timelines, responsibilities, and key deliverables. They ensure that each action is well-planned and that nothing is overlooked during implementation.
- ❖ **Indicators and Monitoring:** To track progress and measure success, cities must establish key performance indicators (KPIs) for each action. These indicators are tied to specific outcomes, such as increased youth participation in public space regeneration or improved health metrics due to sports activities. The IAP also includes baseline values and targets, ensuring that cities can monitor and report on the effectiveness of their actions.

Work Breakdown Structure (WBS)

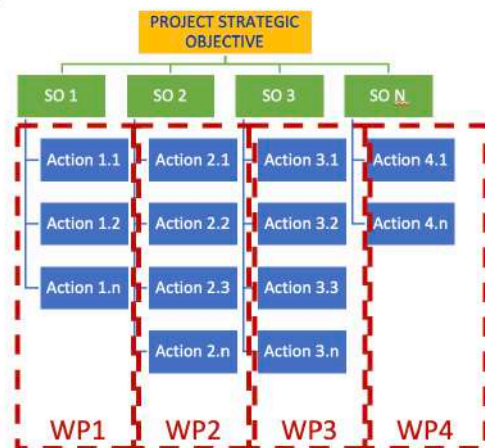
The Work Breakdown Structure (WBS) is PM tool for PLANNING PHASE: it is a **visual, hierarchical and deliverable-oriented deconstruction of a project/plan**.

It is a helpful diagram because it allows to **break down the project scope** and visualize all the **ACTIONS** required to complete the Project/Plan (Re-Gen IAP in our case).

It is articulated per AREAS of ACTIONS or per Specific Objectives (SO).

Per each Area or SO, linked **ACTIONS** are clustered in the so-called **WORK PACKAGEs (WP)**

All the Actions of project are outlined in the work breakdown structure chart, which makes it an essential project planning tool.



Focus on Integrated Planning Tools

Reflection on Integration

Integration is a central theme of the IAP. The planning process emphasizes the need to align various urban sectors - such as education, sports, environmental sustainability, and community engagement - into a cohesive strategy. The IAP fosters collaboration between different stakeholders, breaking down silos and encouraging cross-sectoral approaches to urban regeneration.

One of the key aspects of integration is ensuring that actions are not isolated but are part of a broader, interconnected plan. This is where the IAP's Overall

Logic comes into play. This section of the IAP aligns the city's vision with specific objectives and ensures that all actions contribute to a common goal: creating inclusive, adolescent-friendly public spaces.

For example, sports activities in Urban Sports Hubs (USH) are not just seen as standalone events but are integrated with environmental initiatives like the development of green spaces, or cultural programs aimed at fostering community cohesion. This approach ensures that public spaces serve multiple purposes and meet the diverse needs of the community.

From Testing to Full-Scale Implementation

The insights gained from testing actions are critical in shaping the IAP. As highlighted during the webinar, cities must clearly link the lessons learned from these small-scale tests to the planned actions in their IAP. This process ensures that the IAP is not just theoretical but grounded in practical experience.

The Indicators and Monitoring framework further supports this by providing cities with the tools to evaluate the impact of their actions. By tracking KPIs—such as youth engagement levels, the number of regenerated public spaces, and improvements in community health—cities can continuously assess the effectiveness of their plans and make adjustments as needed.

The shift from testing actions to the development of an Integrated Action Plan represents a major step for cities in the Re-Gen network. By using structured planning tools like the WBS, WDW Matrix, Gantt Chart, and Detailed Action Sheets, cities can ensure that their actions are well-organized, measurable, and aligned with broader strategic goals. The focus on integration ensures that public space regeneration efforts are sustainable, inclusive, and responsive to the needs of young people.

With a strong foundation in place, the IAP will guide cities in transforming their urban landscapes into vibrant, inclusive spaces that foster youth participation, healthy lifestyles, and community cohesion.

WHAT'S NEXT

TESTING and PLANNING ACTIONS

PREPARING FOR THE MID-TERM REFLECTION

As we approach the Mid-Term Reflection during the next Re-Gen core network meeting in Dobrich on 15-16 October 2024, partners will come together to reflect on the progress made so far and the steps needed for the final stages of the project. This milestone will serve as a crucial moment to review the testing actions conducted across the cities, assess how these actions are feeding into the development of the Integrated Action Plans (IAP), and identify any adjustments required moving forward.

The meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss emerging challenges, share best practices, and ensure the integrated planning tools—such as the Work Breakdown Structure, the Who Does What Matrix, Gantt charts, and indicators—are being applied effectively. We will also reflect on how local testing actions are contributing to the overall logic of the IAP, ensuring that each city's plan remains grounded in practical experiences while aligned with broader strategic goals.

In Dobrich, the focus will not only be on reviewing progress but also on exploring ways to enhance thematic integration and stakeholder involvement. Through peer learning sessions and collaborative discussions, we aim to strengthen the network's capacity to implement sustainable urban regeneration plans that are truly youth-friendly and inclusive.

Let's make sure we are ready to engage in this reflective process and build on the collective insights gained so far to shape the next phase of the Re-Gen journey.

CREDITS

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