

Network Journal QJ#3

Quarterly Network Report

Beyond the Urban - July to September 2024 summed up



URBACT



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INTRODUCTION

After a relatively quiet summer for most teams, September arrived with great momentum, marked by the European Mobility Week event held from September 16 to 22, 2024. This event is the European Commission's flagship campaign designed to raise awareness about sustainable urban mobility.

Many members of our network aligned their Pilots and Small Scale Actions with this initiative. Others organized activities and events connected to their department's work, focusing on sustainable mobility, raising awareness, and driving cultural change.

In this issue, we are also excited to share highlights from the 3rd Transnational Meeting of the Beyond the Urban Network, which took place on October 1-2 in Bucharest-Ilfov, Romania. While it falls just outside the reporting period, the meeting was both intense and enriching, deserving a dedicated section.

We hope this publication provides valuable insights and inspires reflection on key themes surrounding sustainable mobility in urban-rural contexts, accessibility, and the characteristics that make public transport and sustainable mobility both desirable and viable choices for users.



Mònica Carrera Ahis

Lead Partner coordinator

1. European Mobility Week

Beyond the Urban took action

During the European Mobility Week, which took place from Monday 16th to Sunday 22nd, September 22nd, some of our partners were very active during its celebration. Some took the opportunity to test their pilots, while others organized activities and events related to sustainable mobility, and some did both! Let's take a look at everything they did.

MACHICO

On the island of Madeira, Portugal, our partners from Machico made an impact in various ways during European Mobility Week. Their initiatives ranged from promoting active mobility in schools to enhancing awareness of the public transport system. They also highlighted the cultural significance of transportation through a historical exhibition hosted on a street temporarily closed to traffic.

A bike-bus to school



Our fellow Portuguese partners successfully organized a Bike Bus initiative in collaboration with the local cycling club, Ludens Clube de Machico. The activity consisted of dividing participants into two groups, each cycling along different routes, eventually meeting at the local secondary school to finish the ride together.

This initiative aims not only to celebrate sustainable mobility but also to raise awareness among the young generation about the importance of adopting into their daily life different mobility choices that are respectful with the environment. It demonstrated that it is possible to accomplish everyday activities using means of transport such as bicycles or scooters.



Experiencing Sustainable Mobility: Machico's Day-Off Challenge

One of the main challenges faced by Machico is the low usage of public transport, particularly the bus service. To address this, the municipality launched an innovative initiative: rewarding every employee who commuted one day during the European Mobility Week by bus or on foot

with an extra day off. This simple yet effective measure not only encouraged employees to explore the available routes and schedules but also sparked lively coffee-break conversations about their experiences.

Following this initiative, two key takeaways emerged. First, many employees realized how unfamiliar they had been with the public transport system, but now they have a clearer understanding of the service, its routes, and its convenience. Second, there was unanimous agreement that for next year's Mobility Week, the challenge should be more ambitious—perhaps requiring a full week of sustainable commuting to earn the day off.

Machico's experience highlights the power of creative, incentive-based approaches in driving cultural change and fostering awareness of sustainable mobility options.

Driving Cultural Change Towards Sustainable Mobility



As part of the European Mobility Week, the exhibition *"The Machico Landscape and Forms of Mobility – 'Shall We Walk?'"* was displayed on Rua General António Teixeira de Aguiar, which was temporarily closed to traffic. Additionally, several bus stops in the parishes of Água de Pena, Machico, and Porto da Cruz were visited to view the artistic interventions created by local schools. Both initiatives aimed to support the cultural shift needed for a more sustainable, low-carbon mobility future.



SZABOLCS 05

Bike&Breakfast - Bike with the Mayor!

During the European Mobility Week, Szabolcs 05 tested their pilot project, which consisted of an awareness-raising event focused on children. The event included various activities such as “Bike&Breakfast - Bike with the Mayor!”, held in the recreational area of Mátészalka municipality. The goal of the event was to change the mobility habits of residents by engaging children.



Nearly 80 students participated in the event held at the town's open-air recreation center. After the presentation of the Beyond the Urban project and a greeting from the Mayor of Mátészalka, the students joined the mayor for a bike ride along the cycling paths in the eastern part of the town. Following the morning exercise, the students took part in a fun quiz on sustainable mobility and enjoyed a delicious breakfast provided by a local food company.

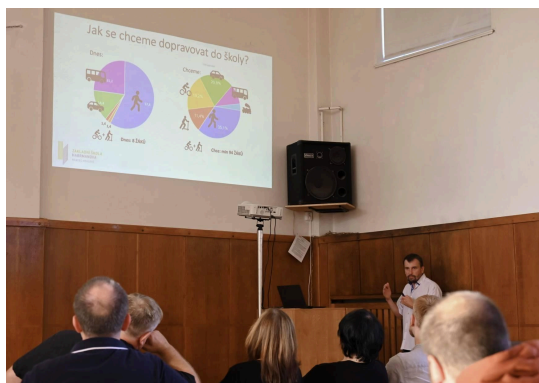


HRADEC KRÁLOVÉ

Biking circuit

In Hradec Králové, the celebration of the European Mobility Week kicked off with an educational activity at Třebší's traffic area, featuring the police officers of the municipality!

Young participants had the opportunity to learn the traffic rules and develop their driving skills through fun activities designed to promote safe road usage. They could also try different means of transport, including bikes, electric bikes and scooters, while learning a little bit more about public urban transport.



School Mobility Plans

The second event was held in the Josefa Gočára Elementary School, where a conference took place to present the completed School Mobility Plans. These plans, developed by the municipality, are scheduled to be implemented this year in four different schools. Technicians, teachers, students and parents were involved in its elaboration.

Car-free day in HK

On 19th September, hundreds of people attended the Car-free and Picnic day at Tylově's square! Attendees were able to rent bicycles, electric bicycles and scooters, take a ride on an electric bus, and learn how to take care of their bikes—all for free. The event also featured paintings, juggling, self defense demonstrations and bike shows and workshops, all accompanied by live music.



BUCHAREST

Our Romanian partners have been very active during European Mobility Week, organizing several activities throughout the week.

SĂPTĂMÂNĂ EUROPEANĂ AMOBILITĂȚII
SHARED PUBLIC SPACE

LINII SPECIALE / SPECIAL LINES
DATA / DATE: 21-22.09.2024

ORARI TIMETABLE

Linie	Traseu	Tip	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S1	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S2	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S3	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S4	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S5	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S6	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S7	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S8	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S9	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S10	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S11	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S12	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S13	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S14	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S15	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S16	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S17	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S18	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S19	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00
S20	GARA DE NOI - GARA DE NOI	Tramvai	08:00	09:00	10:00	11:00	12:00	13:00	14:00	15:00	16:00	17:00	18:00

Pe linile speciale este valabil orice titlu de călătorie metropolitană.
All the metropolitan tickets are valid on special lines.

Mai multe detalii pe: <http://lightline.ro>

*Placă din stația "Gara de Noi" situată pe Bd. Gherghe Doca.
*Departs from "Gara de Noi" stop located on Bd. Gherghe Doca.

Temporary extension of bus lines to the rural areas

Their Pilot Project was included in the European Mobility Week activities and involved the temporary extension of bus transport lines connecting Bucharest to key landmarks in Ilfov County. Insights and conclusions from this initiative will be shared in future journals.

Romanian Railway Company Exhibition

The week featured visits to the Romanian Railway Company, attracting an unprecedented tens of thousands of curious participants. For the first time, visitors had the opportunity to explore the presidential train, vintage trams, historical trolleybuses, the rarely accessible Royal Salon, and the CFR Museum. Additionally, tram depots were open for tours, showcasing both vintage and next-generation trams.



Active and micromobility event

In King Mihai I Park, a dedicated area allowed citizens to try bicycles and electric scooters for free, while police representatives provided education on safe traffic behavior for both pedestrians and drivers.



KOČANI

Promoting bike use among young students and children

On September 20th, the municipality of Kočani organized a bike parade led by the Mayor. The event invited children, young students, bike clubs, and other interested citizens to ride along a designated bicycle route, aiming to promote cycling as a sustainable and viable mode of transportation.



In addition to the parade, a local small-scale Velo Rodeo public event was held for the youngest participants. This event featured a setup of a polygon with 4-5 exercises designed to help children improve their cycling skills.

Complementing these activities, an educational station with LEGO bricks was available, offering children and their parents the chance to learn about and design their own sustainable neighborhoods and safe streets.



See the event's video here:

<https://shorturl.at/K1l4p>

TARTU

Our Estonian partners invited the community to participate over a four-week period by choosing alternative modes of transportation. Participants were encouraged to opt for cycling, walking, public transport (bus and train), carpooling, ridesharing, electric scooters, e-bikes, car-sharing services, motorcycles, mopeds, remote work, and even less common options like skateboarding, rollerblading, or horse riding for everyday mobility.



They also took this opportunity to conduct their SSAs, which involved developing a survey aimed at mapping and measuring the mobility choices of the population.

OSONA

In the Osona area, our Catalan partners supported the promotion of activities taking place in their territory, such as a Transport Race from Calldetenes to Vic, two neighboring municipalities. This event was organized by the Association for the Promotion of Public Transport, a member of their ULG.

What makes this event unique is that participants can choose their preferred mode of transportation to reach the finish line in the city. The goal of the activity is to demonstrate that, in some cases, cars are not the fastest option.



**You can find data
and results from
the race here:**

[https://transportpublic.or
g/cursaosona2024/](https://transportpublic.org/cursaosona2024/)

2. Beyond the Urban highlights

Beyond Mobility Week, other achievements and partner activities are being highlighted.



PARTNER'S STORIES

Ed Sheeran Concert in Park 360, Hradec Králové

Nearly 100,000 people attended two Ed Sheeran concerts at the former Hradec Králové Airport over the last weekend of July, marking the largest event ever held at the venue, according to organizers. For a city of this size, hosting such a massive gathering presented an extraordinary mobility challenge, requiring advanced planning and real-time coordination.

The city rose to the occasion by leveraging its smart mobility information system to manage the unprecedented crowds and traffic. The experience underscored the importance of effective collaboration, prompting city officials to work alongside event organizers, regional transport representatives, city district officials, and the DPmHK public transportation company. Together, they developed a **Transport and Coordination Procedures Manual** to guide the management of large-scale events at the Park 360 area of the airport.

The manual outlines strategies for handling both expected and unexpected disruptions, including traffic redirection, alternative parking solutions, and customized mobility patterns. It equips the city's Traffic and Transport team with tools to ensure smooth and effective mobility management, even during unforeseen circumstances.

These efforts not only addressed the immediate challenges posed by the concerts but also laid the groundwork for Hradec Králové to host future events of similar scale, further cementing its reputation as a city capable of innovative and sustainable mobility solutions.



Autor: Martin Veselý, [MAFRA](#)

E-bikes for the administration: A Step Towards Sustainable Mobility in Kočani



In Kočani, the local administration recognized that many daily work-related trips were short-distance and primarily made using municipal cars. Aiming to reduce the environmental impact and set an example for citizens, the administration launched a pilot project to replace cars with electric bikes for these tasks.

The initiative involved purchasing a fleet of electric bikes at the disposal of municipal staff, encouraging more sustainable mobility within the administration. Recognizing the importance of leading by example, the local government decided to present the new e-bikes to the public during the Bike Parade event, part of the European Mobility Week. In a show of commitment to sustainability, the Mayor and other administrative team members joined the parade, riding the newly acquired e-bikes.

Before the event, the administrative team underwent brief training on the proper use of the electric bikes, ensuring a smooth transition to this new, eco-friendly mode of transport. This initiative not only promotes a cleaner, greener way of working but also aims to inspire citizens to adopt similar sustainable practices in their daily lives.



NETWORK ARTICLE

Nudging Sustainable Transport Choices: Applying Behavioural Science in Mobility

Building on the insights from the webinar held in June, which introduced the topic to attendees—including representatives from all our partner organizations—an article on nudging and behavioral change was published by AdHoc Expert Brian Marrinan.

This issue is particularly crucial for the Beyond the Urban URBACT network, which plans to delve deeper into the topic at the upcoming Transnational Network Meeting (TNM) in Hradec Králové, Czechia, in March 2025.



2019 European Mobility Week. Via Laietana, Barcelona. Photo credit: © Ajuntament de Barcelona

“For decades, transport decision-makers have predominantly focused on technological advances and diversifying urban transport services to meet growing mobility needs. The common assumption has been that passengers make rational decisions based on travel time and cost. This approach overlooks the complexity of human behavior. People are not purely rational actors; they are creatures of habit, emotionally driven, influenced by their environment, and guided by social norms and their own self-image.”

—Brian Marrinan

Read the full article here: [“Nudging Sustainable Transport Choices...”](#)

3rd TNM in Bucharest-Ilfov

and Mid Term Review Meeting

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INTERMODALITY AND THE 3rd TNM IN BUCHAREST-ILFOV

Our Beyond the Urban network reunited once again for the celebration of the 3rd Transnational Meeting, this time in the city of Bucharest, with a focus on intermodality as the main topic.

Moreover, within the framework of this gathering, the MID TERM REVIEW Meeting took place, where the network reflected on the progress of the project to date and how to approach 2025.

Following the same approach as the two previous meetings, members from the 10 municipalities, amongst them technicians and politicians, participated in a two-day program filled with discussions on exploring different transportation modes to enhance mobility systems.

Through various sessions and site visits during the meeting, our partners worked together to gain a better understanding of the best possible practices in intermodal transportation systems.

Digital Apps to Enhance Rural-Urban Connectivity

As the opening session of the TNM, our Network Expert Dr. Clyde Hutchinson led a theoretical presentation on bridging rural and urban mobility in Europe through innovative strategies. Dr Hutchinson emphasized on the significant traffic congestion faced by urban regions on a daily basis, as well as the limited public transportation options available in rural communities.

also enhance the travel experience for residents.

Dr. Hutchinson concluded that these innovative strategies are not merely plausible options; they should be key objectives for European municipalities moving forward.

This session's main goal was to demonstrate, through various innovative transportation solutions currently implemented in cities across Europe, that it is possible to improve connectivity between urban and rural areas. This can be achieved through flexible and integrated transport solutions that leverage digital platforms, shared mobility, and electrification. These approaches not only significantly reduce emissions but



Accessibility and Inclusion in Mobility



Ad-hoc expert Iris Popescu, led the webinar titled “Enhancing Urban Spaces for Active Mobility and Accessibility”. This activity focused on three main objectives: identifying and understanding biases related to disability and accessibility, shifting accessibility from being treated as "special case" to becoming a priority in urban development, and, lastly, learning how to conduct accessibility analyses.

To ensure the session was as relevant as possible, the session counted with the participation of Alexandru Cucu (blind) and Alexandru Tache (electric wheelchair user), both residents of Bucharest, who shared their personal experience with transport accessibility.

Following this, the next part consisted of a discussion centered on the importance of making accessibility a core priority in urban development, rather than treating it as an isolated issue.



You can read the related article **“Turning Accessibility and Inclusion into Measurable Factors for Active Mobility”** by **Iris Popescu** in our website:

<https://urbact.eu/articles/turning-accessibility-and-inclusion-measurable-factors-active-mobility>

New ways to experience Intermodality: The BtU Transport Race

To shift the dynamic from the previous theoretical sessions to a more energized and spirited activity –while still focusing on intermodal mobility– our partners divided into four teams to compete in an Intermodal Race.

The goal was to reach the Bucharest Historical Transport Museum using as many different intermodal transport options as possible. To verify their chosen modes of transport, each team had to take photos and document every step of their route. On their way to the goal, the teams could collect extra-points by capturing photos of crucial infrastructure items—bike racks, electric charging stations, and intermodal signage—that are essential for an interconnected urban transit network. These checkpoints highlighted key themes such as real-time information, accessibility, and environmental sustainability.



You can learn more about this experience in the article

[“Beyond the Urban: A Race Across Bucharest to Experience Intermodal Mobility”](#)

by Dr. Clyde Hutchinson

Strategic Objectives Sessions: A Path to Strengthened Cooperation

On October 2nd, the Strategic Objectives session brought together partners from across the network to share their visions and goals for the future. The session centered on three key aspects of each partner's objectives:

- **Intended Results:** Each partner outlined a specific objective or change they aim to achieve.
- **Result Indicators:** They identified measurable variables to track progress and the impact of their efforts.
- **Output Indicators:** Finally, partners described the tangible benefits their municipalities would gain from implementing their plans.

This session served as a foundational step for the Cooperative Session held on October 3rd. Its aim was to foster collaboration among partners with shared goals.

Building Stronger Cooperation

During the October 3rd session, the partners formed three subgroups based on their common strategic objectives:

Bram, Machico, Kocani, and Szabolcs05 focused on intermodal transportation, particularly around hard actions.

Hradec Králové, Tartu, and Santa Maria da Feira focused on intermodal transportation, particularly around soft actions.

Bucharest-Ilfov, Treviso, and Osona focused specifically on optimizing bus transportation to make it a viable and appealing option—even for car owners.

These sessions represent an important step towards enhanced collaboration, enabling partners to align their objectives, share insights, and create actionable plans that benefit their municipalities and communities.

MID TERM REVIEW MEETING

The mid-term review meeting was based on the results of the mid-term review survey, in addition to considering the template provided by the Secretariat. The survey was conducted between September 5 and 25 and was completed by all network partners. This approach allowed us to delve deeper into topics that generated the most questions or where opinions were more divided.

The process

During the final theoretical session of the Transnational Meeting, our partners participated in the Mid-Term Review and Mid-Term Reflection, led by our Lead Expert Dr. Clyde Hutchinson, Lead Partner coordinator Mònica Carrera and with the attendance of the URBACT Secretariat member Irina Rotaru.

This session was divided into two parts, both aimed at assessing the progress made so far midway through the project journey in relation to the initial roadmap.

The review was based on the analysis of indicators from the MTR survey, which covered six key aspects:

- Progress on the IAP
- Testing of pilot actions
- ULG progress
- Thematic knowledge
- Support mechanisms
- Future planning



The sessions addressed the following aspects:

- Reprogramming of network activities planned to take place, if needed.
- Reviewing and updating all sections of the Application Form.
- Identifying changes needed regarding outputs.

It also provided an opportunity for partners to share their discomforts and concerns that are impacting their project work. This feedback will allow the Secretariat to explore potential changes to project coordination or structure, giving them sufficient time to address the main concerns raised by the partners.

Preliminary conclusions of the Mid Term Review process

The Big Picture

Positive Progress: Most partners report steady progress on their Integrated Action Plans (IAPs), highlighting the value of the URBACT approach in fostering urban-rural transportation innovation and integrated urban planning.

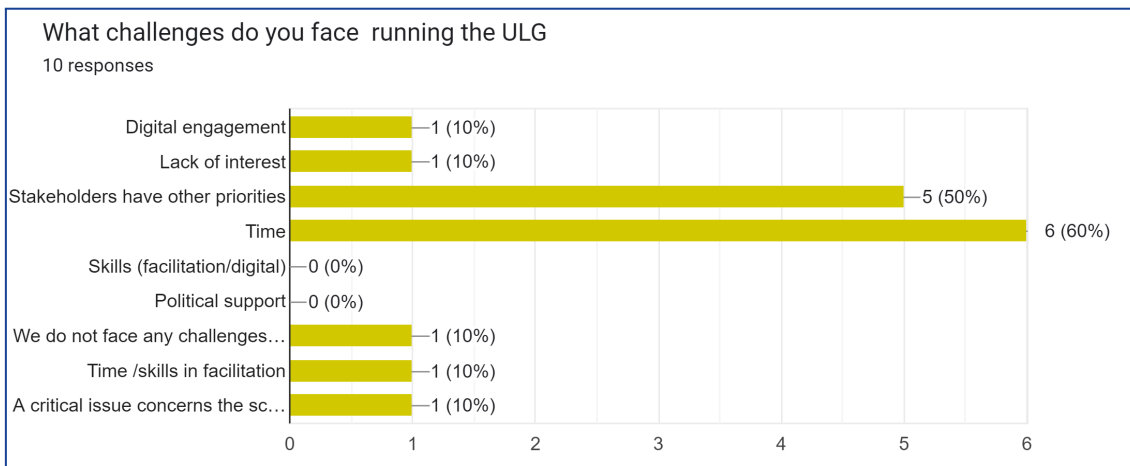
Key Highlights:

- Early alignment of objectives and stakeholder motivations leads to better outcomes.
- Integration of IAP sections remains challenging, particularly linking objectives to overarching goals.
- Active engagement from Local Governance (ULG) groups is vital but varies significantly between cities.
- Effective time management contributes to success, though testing actions sometimes distract from core objectives.

IAP and ULG Progress

Key Findings:

- Progress on vision and context sections is promising.
- Integration checks show mixed progress; more guidance is needed on balancing “soft” and “hard” interventions.



Support and Challenges:

- Strong stakeholder analysis and active political support aid progress.
- Challenges include resource constraints, stakeholder management complexities, and a preference for large-scale, tangible projects over community-driven initiatives

Agreed Actions

- Refocusing efforts on IAP needs and enhancing ULG involvement.
- Improved time management and expanding delivery teams.
- Using design thinking tools to resolve stakeholder conflicts.

Thematic Knowledge and Support

Valuable Network Elements:

- Peer exchanges and sessions with external experts have enriched thematic knowledge.
- Guidance from the Lead Expert has been highly appreciated for addressing urban-rural transport challenges.

Support Needs:

- Case studies, templates, and practical tools for funding, risk assessment, and monitoring.
- Tailored training on horizontal, vertical, and territorial integration.

Looking Ahead

Biggest Risks:

- Inadequate funding and weak risk assessment frameworks.
- Stakeholder engagement and political dynamics pose ongoing challenges.
- Limited capacity and expertise in smaller municipalities.

Mitigation Actions:

- Enhancing peer learning opportunities and stakeholder communication frameworks.
- Allocating additional support to smaller municipalities.
- Collaborating with peer networks for knowledge exchange and funding alignment.

Key Priorities for the Lead Expert

- Strengthen partner capacities in funding strategies and integrated risk management.
- Provide additional resources, including templates and case studies, to bridge knowledge gaps.
- Enhance stakeholder engagement and governance strategies.
- Foster synergies with related networks to improve learning and collaboration.

