

Cities@Heart Toolkit

10 tools to manage your city centre
Based on the experience of 10 European cities

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Cities@Heart playbook – 5 levers

LC : Sustain your local commerce

RL : Reinforce residential life

IE : Promote inclusive urban environments

ID : Build a city centre identity

SG : Create a shared governance

About URBACT

URBACT drives change for better cities using participatory and integrated tools. Since 2002, URBACT has been driving change all over Europe by enabling the cooperation and idea exchange amongst cities within thematic networks, by building the skills of local stakeholders in the design and implementation of integrated and participatory policies, and by sharing knowledge and good city practices.

www.urbact.eu

About the Cities@Heart network

The project brings together ten European urban authorities with differing contexts, but a common goal: **to promote balanced and inclusive city centres for all users.**

Cities@Heart is supported by the Greater Paris Metropolis in the role of Lead Partner and brings together nine other project partners:

- Associação de Municípios de Fins Específicos Pentágono Urbano (Portugal)
- Municipality of Cesena (Italy)
- Municipality of Fleurus (Belgium)
- Granada City Council (Spain)
- Municipality of Celje (Slovenia)
- Kraków Metropolis Association (Poland)
- AMFIKTYONIES Developmental Organisation S.A. (Greece)
- City of Osijek (Croatia)
- County Council of Sligo, Sligo Business Improvement District (Ireland)

About this toolkit

In its playbook, the network has determined a common strategic framework and relevant indicators to transform any city centre in Europe. As a complement to this guide, this toolkit aims to empower policy makers and local technicians to develop informed and measurable public policies in their city centres. These 10 tools share a common feature: they were developed by municipalities, can be implemented mainly in-house, and require only a relatively modest budget, mostly related to the human resource time commitment within public administrations. Most of these tools are inspired by the Small Scale Actions developed during the Cities@Heart journey – experimentations in city centres with a cost of less than 10 000€. For each tool, the related lever from the guide, the context, a step by step methodology, the results obtained, feasibility criteria (including budget level : € : thousands of euros; €€ : tens of thousands of euros or €€€ : hundreds of thousands of euros) and relevant indicators listed in the guide are presented. We extend our sincere thanks to the municipalities that agreed to share their methodologies. They are now yours – feel free to adapt them to suit your needs.

1. Define your city centre's SWOT SG

Inspiration from the Greater Paris Metropolis, France

Since 2018, the Greater Paris Metropolis has been running a program entitled Lively Downtowns, which aims to provide technical and financial support to 130 towns around Paris for the revitalization of their city centres. Municipalities can apply for grants by presenting an action plan that may include initiatives such as market hall renovations, events, territorial marketing, urban furniture or tree planting. These proposals are reviewed by a panel of city centre revitalization experts. As part of the process, municipalities are required to prepare a presentation outlining the context of their city centre. This presentation should include key figures, a map representing their city centre, an overview of their city centre's health, a SWOT analysis, their strategic vision, and an action plan.

Step by Step Methodology

1. **Print out a map to draw the limits of your city centre.** The latter is characterized by a high concentration and diversity of activities. You can refer to the tool on commercial analysis to identify the key centres based on commerce concentration. There might be several centres, either multifunctional or specialized.
2. **Gather all the municipal departments and partners involved in city centre projects,** among others economic development, commerce, events, urban planning, roads, and technical services, but also the internal support services such as communication, finance and legal departments.
3. **Schedule a workshop dedicated to conducting a SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats) to share a common vision of the current situation, in a transversal manner.** Presenting key contextual elements on the ongoing projects can serve as a useful introduction to the workshop, as well as asking some questions that can guide the discussion (see focus below). Each participant can first write one element per category on a post-it, then participants can take the speech if they have similar ideas and discuss the categorization.
4. **Ensure that time is reserved at the end of the session to synthesize the findings**
5. **Define the next steps to strengthen collaboration between departments, including potential action plans and monitoring tools implementation to track progress.**

Focus on the SWOT

Strengths

- What are the assets of our city centre?
- What unique features attract visitors and residents?
- What successful businesses or institutions are located here?
- What cultural or historical landmarks are present?

Weaknesses

- What are the elements inhabitants complain the most about?
- What infrastructure or services are lacking?
- What areas are underdeveloped or neglected?
- What challenges do local businesses face?

Opportunities

- What are the major projects that are impacting positively our city centre (for instance transportation or urban projects)?
- What new businesses or industries could be attracted to the area?
- What partnerships or collaborations could be beneficial?

Threats

- What are the elements that might negatively impact our city centre, be it internal (e.g., overtourism) or external (e.g., creation of a new mall) threats?
- What economic or political changes could pose risks?
- What environmental issues could affect the area?
- What competition exists from other city centres or regions?
- What are the funding capacities of the municipality?

Results

By involving multiple departments under the coordination of a city centre manager, the Lively Downtown program has helped ensure more integrated and collaborative project delivery, starting with a shared vision on the Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities of the city centre.

Indicators

- Number of workers dedicated to the city centre management across different entities
- Number of completed projects in the city centre *in 1-5-10 years*

Transversality

+++

Time

**½ day of workshop
½ day of synthesis**

Budget

€

Skills

**Transversality
Analysis
Synthesis**

Template – SWOT Matrix

You can reproduce this layout on a large paper. You can use the guiding questions provided in the memo to facilitate the discussion and organize the post-its.

Here is an example of a filled canvas with concrete examples from municipalities' presentation, in the Greater Paris Metropolis context.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Strategic location with easy access to the capital city by public transportation • Diverse range of local shops • Low vacancy rate • Presence of a well-known market • A major river runs through the area	• Railway infrastructure divides the territory • Dominance of car traffic causing air and noise pollution • Narrow sidewalks • Lack of visual harmony in storefronts and street alignment. • Lack of a true convivial space • No existing merchant association
Opportunities	Threats
• Arrival of major corporate and governmental headquarters • Heritage conservation initiatives • Redevelopment of riverbanks • Planned metro line extension	• High rents • Competition with malls • Rise in online commerce • Loss of purchasing power

2. Your city centre transformation checklist **SG**

Inspiration from the Cities@Heart network

After completing its SWOT analysis, another useful exercise is to self-assess the state of progress of city centre projects according to the levers and key actions of the methodological framework suggested by the Cities@Heart network. Regarding actions, you can refer to the [guide](#) for more detailed information on each item. Next, you can indicate your level of progress by circling the number that best reflects your current status : 1 for not very advanced up to 5 for very advanced, and “Non Applicable” if it is not relevant to your city centre context. Then, you can prioritize what are the key actions that should be addressed first. You can either mark the 10 most important actions, or use a colour code (**red** for most urgent, **orange** for priority actions and **green** for lower priority). The last column is reserved for the inspiration from Cities@Heart or other municipalities’ best practices.

Template – City Centre Transformation Checklist

Action	Self-Assessment (Current Situation)	Prioritization	Inspiration from Cities@Heart
Lever 1: Sustain your Local Commerce			
LC1 Foster new businesses	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
LC2 Manage the urban mix	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
LC3 Promote innovation	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
LC4 Make the most of your local markets	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
LC5 Implement a delivery system linked to local commerce	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
LC6 Foster a night-time economy strategy	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		

Lever 2: Reinforce Residential Life			
RL1 Be a player in the housing market	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
RL2 Propose different types of housing for specific groups	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
RL3 Adapt housing to climate change	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
RL4 Inhabit the heritage	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
RL5 Protect your housing stock	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
RL6 Integrate housing with services and amenities	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
Lever 3: Promote Inclusive Urban Environments			
IE1 Promote gender-based design of public spaces	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
IE2 Adapt public space for the climate crisis	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
IE3 Provide relevant public services	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
IE4 Reduce traffic in the city centre	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
IE5 Reallocate street space to public use	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
IE6 Develop high-quality community spaces	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		

Lever 4: Build your City Centre Identity			
ID1 Create a visual identity	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
ID2 Rediscover your heritage values	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
ID3 Activate ground floors with a singular identity	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
ID4 Take care of façades and the built environment	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
ID5 Create a sense of belonging	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
ID6 Show and share your city centre	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
Lever 5: Create a Shared Governance			
SG1 Develop a Strategic Plan	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
SG2 Create a cross-sector management body	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
SG3 Engage particular interests	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
SG4 Establish participatory spaces	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
SG5 Strengthen local capacities	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		
SG6 Secure financial mechanisms	1 2 3 4 5 N/A		

Template – City Centre Indicators Checklist

Thanks to the methodological framework suggested by the Cities@Heart network, you can decide on key indicators to track according to availability of data and determine who is in charge of collecting them.

Indicator	Availability of Data	Priority Indicators	Pilot Service
Lever 1 : Sustain your Local Commerce			
Number of businesses			
Commercial density			
Commercial diversity			
Rate of proximity commerce			
Number of new businesses installed			
Vacancy rate			
Number/Rate of municipally managed commercial premises			
Turnover rate			
Footfall / Number of visitors			
<i>Freight delivered</i>			
<i>Number of spaces in logistics hubs</i>			
<i>Number of parking spaces reserved for delivery vehicles</i>			

<i>Number of stakeholders involved in nighttime economy strategy</i>			
<i>Reduction in noise level measurements</i>			
<i>Number of matches with potential businesses</i>			
<i>Number of applications received for subsidies and programs</i>			
Lever 2 : Reinforce Residential Life			
Rate of inhabitants in the city centre vs. the entire city			
Diversity of inhabitants (gender, age, income)			
Vacancy rate in residential buildings			
Rate of principal vs. secondary housing			
Share of affordable housing			
Share of short-term rentals			
Diversity of housing typologies			
Average sale prices (€/sqm)			

Average rent prices (€/sqm)			
Homeownership rate			
<i>Access to essential services within walking distance</i>			
<i>Number of new social housing units delivered</i>			
<i>Number of houses for specific groups</i>			
<i>Number/Rate of renovated buildings</i>			
<i>Number of applications for renovation subsidies</i>			
<i>Number of listed/heritage buildings restored</i>			
<i>Percentage of residents returning to the city centre</i>			
Lever 3: Promote Inclusive Urban Environments			
Reduction of emissions			
Reduction in noise levels			
Reduction in the number of vehicles entering the city centre			
Number of parking spaces eliminated			

Reduction of pedestrian accidents			
Number of accessibility interventions			
Number of new shaded/vegetated public spaces			
Proximity to green spaces			
Proximity to public welfare services			
Proximity to basic educational services			
Lever 4: Build your City Centre Identity			
Number of visitors (regional, national, international)			
Number of events / cultural activities in public spaces			
Number of listed buildings/assets documented in heritage catalogues			
Number of listed emblematic shops			
Number of city centre associations / participatory groups			

Existence of a branding strategy			
Number of artistic interventions (murals, public art)			
Lever 5: Create a Shared Governance			
Existence of a strategic plan			
Number of completed projects			
Number of workers dedicated to city centre management across entities			
Budget dedicated to city centre improvement			
Diversity of Town Centre Management task force members			
Number of participatory spaces created			
Participation rate			
Number of training actions for public servants			
Number of training actions for citizens			
Diversity of funding sources			

3. Analyse residential and commercial uses LC + RL

Inspirations from Celje, Slovenia and Sligo, Ireland

When both cities began their commercial analysis, they aimed to obtain accurate data on commercial vacancy and dereliction levels within their town centres. In Sligo's case, a published article had claimed that the city had the highest commercial vacancy rate in the country. Their objectives were to accurately quantify the percentage of commercial and residential vacancy rates and diversity.

Step by Step Methodology

1. **Identify and collect the data that are already available**, such as a preexisting database of commercial premises/ economic activity/ licenses and clean out the data set to get only city centres premises. Check with your metropolitan, regional and national authorities or chambers of commerce if they already have available data.
2. **Define the data to be collected and the collection method**, with on-site surveys that can be facilitated thanks to an application, taking inspiration from Sligo. In the focus on key premises information below, you will find the list of information collected on commercial premises. This survey can also determine the occupation of the upper floors, orienting residential policies.
3. **Collect the data for each property, internally or with external procurement**. In the case of Celje, a real estate agency was mandated to collect specific information to property owners. For Sligo, it took about 6 days for 150 properties, with surveyors.
4. **Analyse the survey data**. To be more speaking, the results can be presented with statistics, visuals, etc. If possible, they can be integrated as a new layer in the city's geographic information system named "Vacant Commercial/ Residential Premises in the City Centre" visualised as geolocated points
5. **Update every year or 2 years the data**.

Please note that the legal definition of vacancy (duration after which a given premise is considered vacant) may differ from one European country to another.

Focus on Premises Key Information

- Address
- Description of the unit
- Building Identification number
- Unit Identification (by floor)
- Graphic layout / floor plan
- Surface area
- Number of rooms
- Sanitary facilities
- Type of heating
- Number of shop windows and doors
- Employee parking options
- Location and contact information of owners
- Intended use (according to zoning rules)
- For rent / for sale
- Estimated price
- Photograph of the premises
- ❖ Status of each floor (ground, first, second) :
 - Occupied / vacant / under reconstruction
 - Use : Sligo used the following system : C for commercial use, M for mixed use e.g. office / retail / storage and R denotes residential use.
Example : CRR means commercial use at ground floor level, residential at first floor level and residential at second floor level. You can detail even further the ground floor activity type.
 - Does the building have separate access to the upper floors? yes/ no
 - Building condition : excellent / good / poor
 - Technical and functional specifications of the units

Focus on the Commercial Mix

The city centre is where the greatest diversity of uses can be found. In an ideal city centre, one would find at least the following activities:

Key activities for prime frontage

> Animation drivers

Retail and Commerce

- Grocery stores and supermarkets
- Convenience stores
- Bakeries, butchers and fishmongers
- Pop-up stores
- Flower shop

Food and Hospitality

- Cafés and tea rooms
- Restaurants
- Bars and pubs
- Street food stalls
- Market for local producers

Personal Equipment

- Clothing and shoe stores
- Accessories stores
- Second-hand shops
- Sporting goods and leisure stores

Equipment

- Hardware store
- Furniture shop
- Medical equipment suppliers

Key activities for secondary frontage

> Footfall generators

Local Economy

- Co-working spaces
- Business incubators
- Local artisan shops

Health and wellness services

- Pharmacies
- Health clinics
- Hair salons
- Beauty

Culture and Leisure

- Museums
- Art galleries
- Libraries
- Cinemas
- Theaters
- Cultural centres
- Experiential Leisure Hubs

Education

- Schools
- Nurseries
- Community centres
- Training facilities

Administrative services

- Administrative offices
- Town Hall
- Banks, ATMs

Priority should be given to meeting residents' essential needs by installing key amenities along key retail frontages. Municipalities should also remember that in addition to essential and proximity shops, city centres must also offer spaces for workers, and that culture, leisure, education, and administrative services are important traffic generators, even though they are not directly linked to consumption. A clear understanding of the different types of uses in the city centre helps to better balance them, and to activate public tools to adapt the offer to the expectations of residents, workers, and tourists.

Transversality**++****Time**

Data collection : A few days
 [Optional] App development
 for data collection : 1 day

Budget**€€****Skills**

Data collection and Analysis
 App Development

Results

In Sligo, even if work is still in progress, early indications are that levels of vacancy are not as high as presented by the initial survey of the article. In Celje, a colleague responsible for business recruitment (“headhunting”) is now in charge of regularly updating the table to reflect changes in the status of each unit.

Indicators

- Number of businesses
- Commercial density
- Commercial diversity
- Rate of proximity commerce
- Number of new businesses installed
- Vacancy rate
- Number/Rate of municipality managed commercial premises
- Vacancy rate in residential buildings

4. Attract entrepreneurs LC

Inspiration from Celje, Slovenia

As part of their Small Scale Action, Celje developed a one-pager with key information for entrepreneurs starting or relocating their businesses in their city centre. Having a single entry point that provides all the essential information makes it easier for new entrepreneurs to settle down.

Step by Step Methodology

1. Gather the content with key stakeholders. Together with relevant municipal departments and stakeholders, Celje compiled all key information necessary for new or potential entrepreneurs. This can be a nice opportunity to clarify and coordinate the various kinds of support and rules provided by the municipality and other stakeholders. Each item included contact details or links to relevant municipal webpages, downloadable forms, or instructions.

2. Conduct a call to choose a design studio in charge of creating an attractive A3 poster. In addition to the one-pager, Celje designed stickers for the shop windows of businesses that received municipal support (rent co-financing). These stickers included a QR code that links directly to the digital version of the one-pager.

3. Create a digital access and update it regularly. The PDF version is hosted on the City of Celje's website, and the QR code provides quick access. The one-pager is regularly updated in cooperation with the design agency, ensuring that content remains current and relevant.

4. Contact entrepreneurs. Look at your SWOT and find what is missing in the city centre. Get involved in fairs. Contact key commerce and economic stakeholders and networks. Look on Google Maps at existing shopkeepers and send an email to know who wants to open another shop.

Focus on the key information

Support

- Availability of Commercial Spaces (Municipally and privately owned)
- Business Support : co-financing for economic development support, rent, tangible and intangible investments, self-employment, tourism infrastructure (e.g. outdoor seating), events
- Cooperation opportunities and networking

Requirements

- Operating hours
- Rules for displaying prices
- Urban planning opinions for construction, cultural heritage permit
- Storefronts, accessibility, safety, parking and delivery requirements
- Use of public space for outdoor terraces, furniture, events and signage
- Best practices for energy consumption, waste collection and treatment

Make sure that you add the relevant contacts for each information, preferably generic email addresses, to keep the information accessible over time.

Transversality

++

Time

A few days

Budget

€

Skills

Synthesis
Communication

Results

Following the launch and the placement of stickers with QR codes, two colleagues whose contact details are listed on the one-pager noticed a slight increase in the number of inquiries. Celje also received valuable feedback on how they could improve the information available for entrepreneurs.

Indicators

- Number of new businesses installed
- Number of matches with potential businesses
- Number of applications received for subsidies and programs

5. Activate your vacant premises LC

Inspirations from Celje, Slovenia and Fleurus, Belgium

Both cities repurposed a vacant premise as a tool and strategy, but with different objectives. In Fleurus, the initiative stemmed from an external audit, which recommended the creation of a central meeting point for shopkeepers, new entrepreneurs, partners, and the broader community. Since 2024, this welcoming space installed in an empty premise aims at supporting shopkeepers and other economic stakeholders with information, coaching sessions and organizing meetings. Celje focused on a more community-oriented space including inhabitants, artists, cultural groups and NGOs with regular events.

Step by Step Methodology

1. **Carry a public survey and analysis of the needs of citizens, local businesses and the local community.**
2. **Search for and rent a suitable space.** Based on the project's objectives, both municipalities identified and rented a centrally located and accessible space.
3. **Furnishing and setting up the space.** The space was then fitted out to be functional, welcoming, and suited to both one-on-one meetings and small group gatherings for Fleurus. For Celje, the layout was intentionally kept minimal to allow the community to make the space their own for each event. A visual identity when the temporary model was considered a success was created.
4. **Manage the space.** In the case of Fleurus, the City centre Manager is in charge of coordinating the actions, building relationships with stakeholders, and bringing the space to life, and in the case of Celje the management has been attributed to a public institute specialized in cultural events and promotion.

Please note that the legal conditions of the occupation of an empty premise may differ from one European country to another.

Focus on the Space Management

Fleurus

Initially, the space operated with regular open hours, but they noticed that very few people were coming spontaneously. They have since shifted to appointment-based access, which allows them to better tailor support to the needs of each entrepreneur. Fleurus also offers free of charge meeting rooms to people who are just starting out and need a professional

space for their first client appointments or business meetings. Additionally, they are currently considering turning part of the space into a small coworking area, to further support local entrepreneurs and encourage collaboration.

In Fleurus, the space does not generate any revenue. The initial setup cost was around 15 000€, in addition to a monthly rent of 750€, covered within the municipal budget, in addition to energy and utility costs.

Celje

During the pilot period, a temporary use model was tested: interested stakeholders could apply for short-term use of the space through an open call and an online application form. To be eligible, applicants had to meet general requirements (having a registered seat or continuous activity in Celje) and were evaluated based on these objectives:

- Fostering original and high-quality artistic production for diverse target groups
- Supporting artistic and other projects relevant to Celje
- Increasing public access to cultural content
- Encouraging creative projects from other sectors (entrepreneurship, education, sports, youth, intergenerational cooperation) that contribute to urban life

According to Slovenian national law, municipalities cannot provide temporary space use entirely free of charge, except for humanitarian organizations of national importance. A minimum usage fee must be charged. GT8's full 146 m² is available for 25€ per day. The initial investment was 20 000€.

Transversality

+++

Time

A few hours/ week for meetings, coordination, booking

Budget

€€-€€€

Skills

Project Management
Communication

Results

Fleurus

In Fleurus, the results below were communicated and showed the positive impact of the City centre Manager. This helped them attract more shopkeepers and entrepreneurs to join in. The results also help them see what is working well and what needs to be improved. They also help them create new activities that fit the needs of the

Celje

The space was in use 60% of the time throughout the year, exceeding the initial 50% occupancy goal.

merchants. Finally, sharing these results helps build trust and good relationships with local partners.

Indicators

- Number of new businesses installed
- Number of matches with potential businesses
- Number of applications received for subsidies and programs
- Number of training actions for businesses
- Number of events / cultural activities in *public-managed* spaces
- Number of participatory spaces created

Fleurus

In 2024, the following activities have been organized:

- Number of meetings held with merchants during breakfasts or after-work events: **6**
- Number of training sessions delivered: **5**
- Number of individual appointments with project initiators seeking to launch their business: **12**
- Number of merchants assisted in obtaining grants or improving their shops: **4**

Celje

In 2024 – the first full year of operation, GT8 hosted 35 diverse projects, including:

- 11 creative workshops for children and adults
- 3 fashion pop-up events
- 3 culinary pop-up events
- 2 art exhibitions
- 6 consultations, lectures, and community meetings
- 7 theatre performances
- 1 children's exhibition
- Days of Design Celje (4-day event)
- A month-long Charity Christmas Gift Factory

6. Organize events ID

Inspiration from Cesena, Italy

Cesena, a city of 100 000 inhabitants, hosts a wide variety of events throughout the year. However, the number of available event spaces is limited, which can lead to scheduling conflicts. To optimize event planning and resource allocation, a shared calendar across sectors was created to provide a clear view of all events throughout the year, leading to better coordination and fewer overlaps. By coordinating all these cultural, gastronomic, sports, and volunteer events, the goal is to develop a unified strategy for the animation of the historic centre.

Step by Step Methodology

- 1. Design your table on Excel**, please find below the example from Cesena.
- 2. Share it with your colleagues and organize a launch meeting** to make sure all municipal services organizing events, in-house or with external partners, know where the table is and can update it regularly, including elected officials. This table can be a simple shared Google Sheets file or be integrated into any internal CRM tool.
- 3. Update regularly the table.** In the case of Cesena, one person of the tourism team is in charge of contacting the various services to make sure the table is up to date.

Template – Events Table

Hour	Place	Initiative	Organizer	Notes
JANUARY				
Monday, Jan 1				
15:00–10:30	Piazza della Libertà	Christmas Train, departure and arrival in Piazza della Libertà	L'Accento	
16:00–17:30	Piazza Almerici	Circus Tent – Children's Christmas (show for	L'Accento	

		children) from 18:30 to 17:30 at Cico di Natale		
11:23	Parco Marzocchi	Enchanted Christmas – Animation, dancing and games for children	Il Giardino del Gusto srl	Christmas Notice
Tuesday, Jan 2		<i>(no events listed)</i>		
Wednesday, Jan 3		<i>(no events listed)</i>		
Thursday, Jan 4	15:00	Streets of the historic centre	"The Fairy Tale of Christmas in Cesena" – narrative itinerary for children and families with Roberto Fabbri ("The Savior's Player"). Departure from the salt warehouse. Treasure hunt of the Three Wise Men.	Atlantide
Friday, Jan 5	16:00–17:30	Viale Mazzarini (location unclear)	Art in Celebration – Workshops and Adventures for a Magical Christmas – "Look at the stars, Befana is coming!"	Artespina Aps
18:00–22:00	Parco Marzocchi	Enchanted Christmas – Live band and animation	Il Giardino del Gusto srl	Christmas Notice
15:30–17:00	Rocca Malatestiana	"Christmas is Love!" – Music, food and creativity for family celebrations! Creative workshop for parents and children: Magic Winter and Portrait of Befana	Micapoco	Christmas Notice

Cities@Heart Events Ideas

- Seasonality
- Tradition and heritage
- Events promoting sustainability, second hand, car-free day
- Promotion of another culture
- Night market
- Market for children
- Foodtruck/ Street food festival
- Music and Dance Performances
- Talent show
- Open-air cinema
- Local designers and shopkeepers fashion show
- Escape game
- Treasure Hunt in the different shops
- Portrait exhibition of local shopkeepers

Transversality

+++

Time

4 hours/week

Budget

Free software

Skills

Consistency,
Communication

Results and Indicators

- Number of events/ cultural activities in public spaces *registered and organized*
- Number of workers dedicated to the city centre management across different entities
- *Number of schedule conflicts avoided*

7. Measure footfall LC + ID

Inspirations from Sligo, Ireland

Sligo has been measuring footfall in the heart of the city centre since 2014 thanks to pedestrian counters. This is to ensure they are making data informed decisions in relation to place making, pedestrian movement, traffic flow. The objectives were two-fold : to accurately map footfall patterns across the core streets of the town centre and to offset the urban myth of a ghost town. Stakeholders involved included the town regeneration officer, the roads department and the Business Improvement District.

Step by Step Methodology

- 1. Procure footfall counters**
- 2. Identify the supplier**
- 3. Determine strategic locations with expertise of supplier**
- 4. Install the counters**
- 5. Train stakeholders on accessing the data platform**
- 6. Generate reports**
- 7. Analyse individual reports**
- 8. Conduct an overall analysis over a 12 month period**
- 9. Disseminate reports across stakeholder platforms**

Focus on the different counters technologies

Note there is a wide range of options for monitoring footfall, e.g. camera, laser, technologies using mobile apps etc. It is recommended you research the best option within your budget that best meets your needs.

In 2013, Sligo needed a basic model of counter. Pedestrian counters function on an hourly rate giving them the busiest date of month, day of week, hour of day per a report and also allows them to compare season on season, for instance between Christmas 2024 and Christmas 2025 footfall. Since then, Sligo has recently opted for a more sophisticated and easier to manage model. Do not hesitate to consult other municipalities and Business Improvement Districts to get feedback on best functionality for your municipality needs.

Transversality	+	Time	A few days
Budget	€€ for physical counters	Skills	Data analysis

Results

The system Sligo used generated reports based on their requirements. They tracked results by cross comparing across data counter locations and time of day, week, month and quarterly. The results are purely quantitative but can be paired with qualitative feedback from events or further analysed with weather patterns. The results are used to track footfall at festivals and events and advise businesses of changing trends from one specific period to the other (e.g. Pre Covid and Post Covid).

Here is a typical example of information that can be generated from digital counters :

Rockwood Parade Kennedys totals

Data Summary

Identifier XXXXXXXX

Total Traffic for Period 26,799

Monthly Average 45,409

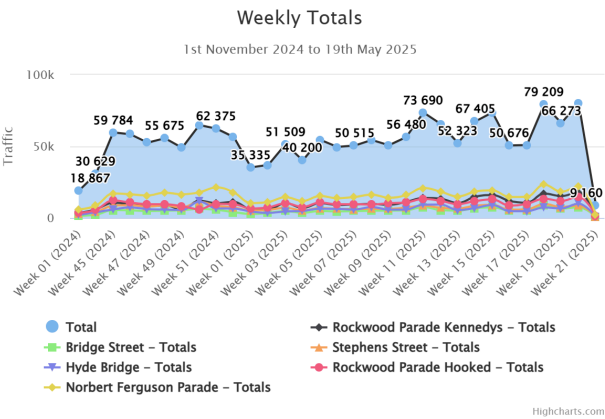
Weekly Average 10,422

Daily Average 1,489

Busiest day of the year 2024-11-01

Busiest day of the week Saturday

Busiest hour of the day 16



Indicators

- Footfall / Number of visitors

8. Experiment traffic pacification IE

Inspiration from Krakow Metropolitan Area, Poland

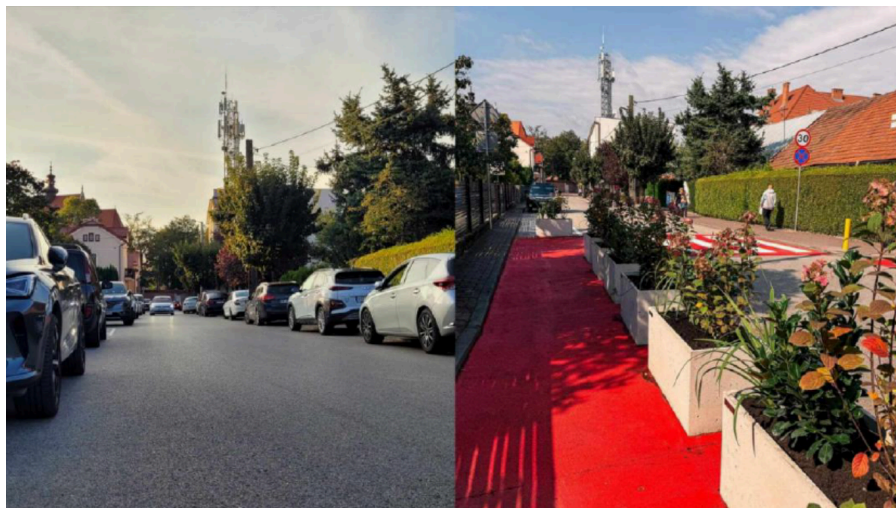
Niepolomice, a municipality belonging to Krakow Metropolis, identified the following problems from the municipality's development strategy :

- Growing population and problems due to population growth such as availability of public services, safety in public spaces, increased traffic;
- The city centre's organization was no longer sufficient and did not meet all needs;
- Heavy traffic in the vicinity of primary schools located in the city centre.

In the framework of the Cities@Heart project, an idea for their Small Scale Action arose as a result of a strategic process and additional traffic studies conducted by external experts commissioned by the municipality. Niepolomice launched an experiment on the traffic pacification in the city centre. The objectives were to :

- Jointly define new traffic organization principles around a major generator of specific traffic, namely a primary school, which will serve as a model for determining target solutions and standards applicable to other schools operating in the area
- Facilitate a dialogue process among the various stakeholders operating in the area.
- Verify the effectiveness of public intervention carried out within the scope of this project.

The stakeholders involved included the educational and public works department (around 10 municipal employees), school directors, parent-teacher associations, local entrepreneurs, and inhabitants of the area.



Niepolomice's Small Scale Action Before / After (2024)

Step by Step Methodology

1. **Define the area of intervention and relevance of an experiment of traffic reduction experiment there, based on existing data if available.** These data can include transport infrastructure like parking, pedestrian and cycle ones, measurement of vehicle and non-motorized traffic, hazardous locations and situations from the perspective of road safety.
2. **Organize several meetings** (around 6-7 in the case of Niepolomice) with all relevant stakeholders (city employees, entrepreneurs, parent-teacher associations, school principals, teachers, pupils, local inhabitants).
3. **Work on the concept and scheme of changes.** The concept consisted in implementing a temporary change in the organization of road traffic around both schools located in the centre of Niepolomice and to conduct an information and education campaign aimed at encouraging users of the space to change their commuting habits. A traffic engineer worked on the traffic organization project.
4. **Do the painting and street arrangement before the pilot program starts.**
5. **Co-creation in the street space with children and youth. Organize educational lessons for children.**
6. **Test actions for 6 weeks during the back-to-school period.**
7. **Conduct related research**, including observations, measurements, and surveys of users of the changed space, to verify the relevance of the actions undertaken, the level of user adaptation to the new situation, and their subjective assessment of the changes implemented.
8. **Evaluate the results meeting with the steering group.**
9. **Prepare the research results.**
10. **Discuss the pilot study findings and prepare a summary report.**
11. **Communicate on the project's results** thanks to leaflets, posters, and a press release. It is key to keep all stakeholders involved on the outcomes of the experimentation and the future evolutions.

Transversality

++

Time

6 months
For planning, meeting,
implementing and analyzing

Budget

External experts support : ~6000€
Cost of purchasing pots and
plants: ~3000€
Traffic management: ~800€
Painting streets and road signs:
~2500€
TOTAL: 12 300€

Skills

Traffic research
Communication

Results

In Niepolomice, positive feedback was collected from the users, they felt the project was theirs. The main conclusions from the conducted research are as follows:

- Most of those who responded to the survey believe that the changes led to smoother traffic flow. 71% of respondents noted positive changes, while 29% felt that traffic had worsened, suggesting that although there has been an overall improvement, certain areas still require further optimization.
- The clarity of the traffic organization was also positively assessed; 81% of respondents observed an improvement in this aspect, indicating better signage and clearer rules. Survey participants considered that most users were following the new traffic organization (88%). The enforcement of rules by traffic wardens undoubtedly had an impact on compliance.
- 80% of surveyed adults believed the pilot changes improved safety near the school; for children, this figure was 71%. During measurements taken during the pilot study, a decrease in the number of stops and potentially hazardous situations at the school gate was also observed. Drivers have also been observed to be more cautious, directly as a result of the new traffic rules. Another important change was the designation of a special pedestrian path, separated by planters, and the creation of new pedestrian crossings, which provide safer and more comfortable access to school for pedestrians.
- According to the data, 47% of parents drive their children to school every day. As a result, there is a need to park cars for a few minutes near the school. This is especially problematic in the mornings, when the number of parents arriving near the school in a short period is high, leading to increased demand for parking spaces.
- Surveys of teachers and parents revealed overwhelmingly positive feedback on the introduced changes. 69% of teachers considered the changes satisfactory and recommended that they be implemented permanently, while 22% said the changes needed further work and only 9% wanted the previous arrangement reinstated.
- Parental feedback was similarly positive, although a larger number of parents indicated the need for further change (45%), compared to those who considered the changes to be satisfactory (45%). 7% indicated a need for further changes but not the ones previously implemented, while only 3% wished to revert to the previous system.

Indicators

- Reduction of emissions
- Reduction in noise levels
- Reduction in the number of vehicles entering the city center
- Number of parking spaces eliminated
- Reduction of pedestrian accidents

9. Create a sense of place IE + ID

Inspiration from Cesena, Italy

Temporary uses and tactical urbanism are increasingly employed as practical tools for co-designing the city with its users and, simultaneously, for testing new uses before making them permanent.

The benefits of this approach lie in two main aspects:

- Increased interest and engagement from those involved in the co-design process, due to the immediacy of the results.
- The possibility of leveraging streamlined administrative procedures. This allows for the active use of the medium-to-long time intervals of ordinary planning and implementation – often tied to complex funding and procedures. These intervals are thus transformed from waiting times into productive periods for experimentation, generating new ideas, and establishing new habits for space use.

In Cesena's case, the test action focused on a segment of the North-South pathway crossing the city centre. This location was chosen because early meetings with the Urban Local Group highlighted the critical need to address accessibility in the historic centre. Therefore, the action's main objective was to test a new spatial arrangement capable of simplifying access and making it more pleasant to pause and interact for various categories of residents and city users (cyclists, parents with strollers, the elderly, youth, etc.). Cesena's intervention could be summed into 3 key objectives : Visual-Perceptual Continuity, Homogeneous Arrangement of Street Furniture, and Storytelling and/or Territorial Animation.

Essentially, the action served as an operational expedient to:

- Structure the Urban Local Group's work and engage them on the theme of city centre liveability.
- Utilize the various co-design phases of the process as a discussion technique to identify the centre's different issues and, based on a very concrete situation, to refine the focus, vision, and objectives of the Integrated Action Plan.

Step by Step Methodology

- 1. Identify the site for the experiment.**
- 2. Organize working subgroups to propose concrete ideas for intervention, summarized in a joint document.** Every workshop was designed to be of interest for the local stakeholders : short lecture by an expert on the history of the area, collaborative site walk and mapping shared in a collective design scheme, review by the municipal officials.
- 3. Translate ideas into actionable projects** thanks to a cooperation between the Municipal Public Works, Economic Development, and EU Projects departments to find the right partners for implementation.
- 4. Set up the physical installation.** In the case of Cesena, it included seating and vegetation (addressing visual continuity) and the placement of notice boards and the first thematic series of 9 prints (initiating the storytelling element).
- 5. Activate the space and gather data.** An inaugural event needs to be held to officially present the newly designed space and to launch the Integrated Action Plan. Crucially, this event needs to include data collection on how the space is used, providing immediate, qualitative feedback on the success of the new layout and identifying areas for future iteration.

Focus on the different physical interventions

1. Vegetation and plants: enhancing climate resilience and aesthetics

- **Goal addressed:** Climate resilience, visual-perceptual continuity, and de-mineralisation of the historic centre.
- **What they do:** They introduce planters with trees and shrubs.
- **Why it works:** Beyond aesthetics, the vegetation directly tackles the critical need to make the historic centre less mineral and more resilient to climate change and summer heat. This action serves as a proof of concept, complementing a larger IAP action that will introduce overhead shading (e.g., tensile awnings) along the thoroughfare, following the model of other Mediterranean cities like Seville.

2. Modular seating and street furniture: promoting accessibility and conviviality

- **Goal addressed:** Conviviality, accessibility, and habit creation.
- **What they do:** They purchase and install permanent, modular street furniture (benches and seating) that is integrated with the planters. This was a deliberate choice to move beyond temporary tactical urbanism elements and test a high-quality, long-term solution on a small scale.
- **Why it works:** By providing fixed, high-quality furniture, they will create welcoming pause points for all city users (elderly, parents, shoppers). The modularity, integrated with the green elements, ensures functional flexibility while signaling a permanent commitment to dedicating space for rest and social interaction.

3. Storytelling boards: activating local identity through public communication

- **Goal Addressed:** Territorial animation, sense of place (identity), and public engagement.
- **What they do:** They install public notice boards designed to host thematic prints/artworks focused on local history, culture, and current affairs.
- **Why it works:** They use the language and style of public advertising but applied high-quality, cultural content to create an Open-Air Art Gallery. This allows them to "hook" the public effectively, turning the area into a conversational piece. While this initial action funds the installation, a subsequent IAP action will guarantee the cyclical rotation and refresh of the thematic posters, ensuring the storytelling element remains dynamic, engaging, and relevant over time.

Transversality

+++

Time

2 years

Budget

10000€/200m related to hard

Skills

Co-design and Facilitation

costs for set up

Cross-sector negotiation
Storytelling and Communication

Results

This collaborative work produced several key lessons:

- **Awareness of Complexity:** The interaction between local stakeholders' creative concepts and the officials' procedural requirements led to greater mutual awareness of the complexity involved in translating wishes into concrete, feasible actions.
- **A "Compass" for an Integrated Action Plan :** The ambition to create something visible, which complicated the test action's elaboration, ultimately served as a compass, keeping the Integrated Action Plan's objectives firm.
- **External Buy-in and Legacy:** The visibility and coherence of the co-designed action proved so successful that a key ULG member proposed an [independent action plan](#) to expand the "Storytelling" initiative, demonstrating strong external buy-in and a clear pathway for the action's sustainability

Indicators

- Number of city centre associations / participatory groups
- Number of participatory spaces created
- Diversity of funding sources

10. Understand city centre users' expectations SG

Inspiration from Sligo, Ireland

Perception equals reality therefore it is vital to understand the perception of the citizens towards their city centre, in particular to support town centre regeneration. Sligo had previously done a Town "Health Check" in 2020 and wanted to look at citizen perception of their town again post Covid. In addition, Sligo has a 4 million investment converting a former car park into a public events space. They wanted to gain an understanding of the return of their investment. One of the most appropriate methods to do this was to gather the economic impact of events held in the space. Sligo wanted to capture 4 elements :

1. Priority areas for citizens e.g. transport, festival and events that can later be compared with transport numbers, festival and event numbers and attendee figures, football levels
2. Town pride through the uptake of [Love Sligo Gift Card Campaign](#) that can be compared monthly for individual transactions, average basket spend transactions in the card campaign
3. Economic impact of festivals and events in Queen Maeve Square (outdoor events space)
4. Levels of safety perceived that can be later compared with crime stats and shortly with Sligo BID Purple Pulse App which will measure anti social behaviour experienced by business community

Stakeholders involved include Sligo Business Improvement District, Sligo County Council, Sligo Night Time Economy Advisor, Sligo Town Regeneration Officer and Love Sligo Gift Card Programme Co-Ordinator.

Step by Step Methodology

1. **Create a bespoke questionnaire** (See Templates of Consumer and Business Questionnaires below)
2. **Print and upload bespoke questionnaires on Word or Google Forms**
3. **Disseminate surveys** (printed versions, QR codes, social media)
4. **Run a digital competition to encourage participation** e.g. 100€ Gift Card raffle. Surveys run for approximately 2-3 weeks. It is key to launch them before the event to get high engagement levels.)
5. **Collect physical surveys.** Manually input physical surveys into digital surveys for collective responses.

6. Create initial analysis for each survey.

7. Conduct detailed analysis of cumulative surveys. (12 surveys conducted across a 12 month period and across a range of event types.)

Note that this research takes time but can often be shared between team members and can be applied to multiple projects, so the time is strategically invested to benefit multiple projects. For example assessing people's safety viewpoints contributes to community safety projects, festival and events research, evening and night time economy research.

Focus on the Love Sligo Gift Card

This card was used to incentivize purchase in local businesses, but also as a nudge to collect citizen opinions. The city would offer one Gift Card to one of the respondents of the survey (150€).

1. Secure gift card supplier after researching and tender process
2. Trial test model
3. Finalise brand and marketing campaign which focuses on town pride and citizen engagement
4. Hire a Programme manager to sign up participating businesses
5. Launch public marketing campaign
6. Run monthly reports to keep up to date on number of transactions, average transaction value, number of cards purchased.

Transversality

+

Time

3.5 days per survey
½ day for design of questionnaire
2 days/ survey for physical and digital

Budget

Printing surveys- €40 per survey
Detailed analysis of cumulative surveys if outsourced

Skills

Research
Data analysis
Marketing
Place Management

Results

Surveys provided a space for qualitative feedback in addition to quantitative, easily comparable results. The three highest barriers identified by respondents to participating in evening and night time activities in Sligo were as follows:

- 1) Lack of awareness of what's on (47.8%)
- 2) Transport out of Sligo challenges (47.1%)
- 3) Too expensive to participate (32%)

The public identified the following three actions as priorities for the evening and night time in Sligo:

- 1) Queen Maeve (Main) Square being utilised (72.4%)
- 2) Increased events and activities (57.4%)
- 3) Better promotion of events and activities to know what's on (54.8%)

These findings have led to the launch of several projects :

- A Night Time Economy Diversification Grant for people to run events between Sunday and Thursday after 6pm to increase events and activities.
- A public campaign conducted to promote the use of their main square as an events space with a dedicated Manager to support those wishing to run an event.
- Public transport services saw an expansion of services, including a new route and extended hours.
- A Festival and Events Strategy was launched in May 2025 by Sligo County Council after a consultation with a number of stakeholders including festival and event organisers.
- A consultant was hired to deliver a festival sponsorship programme for the town festivals to support them in accessing new revenues of income.
- An events website was launched and marketed promoting activities in Sligo.
- An AI ideas generator for creating itineraries for visitors to Sligo was developed by Sligo County Council.
- The stats from the Love Sligo Gift Card have been shared which has further increased town pride as Sligo town now has the highest number of businesses participating in a gift card scheme across Ireland the United Kingdom. The Love Sligo Gift Card has become embedded into the town.

Indicators

- Participation rate
- Number of visitors (regional, national, international)

Templates – Surveys

In the section with templates to reuse/ print out, you will find several surveys :

A. Post Event (Public)

B. Post Event (Businesses)

C. Evening and Night Time Economy (Public)

D. Evening and Night Time Economy (Businesses)

These surveys were shared with visitors following events that were held in Sligo. You can adapt it to your own event context with all the answers possibilities, in particular the elements that are in yellow.

A. Post Event Public Survey

Sligo St Patrick's Festival Post Event Public Survey

Please fill this quick survey and let us know your thoughts and you could win a 100€ Love Sligo gift card!

1. How did you arrive at the event? *

☐ Walking ☐ Bus ☐ Bike ☐ Car ☐ Train

2. Gender: How do you identify? *

☐ Man ☐ Woman ☐ Non-Binary ☐ Prefer to self-identify: ☐ Other:

3. Which county are you from? *

☐ Sligo ☐ International Visitor ☐ Antrim ☐ Armagh ☐ Carlow ☐ Cavan ☐ Clare ☐ Cork ☐ Derry ☐ Donegal ☐ Down ☐ Dublin ☐ Fermanagh ☐ Galway ☐ Kerry ☐ Kildare ☐ Kilkenny ☐ Laois ☐ Leitrim ☐ Limerick ☐ Longford ☐ Louth ☐ Mayo ☐ Meath ☐ Monaghan ☐ Offaly ☐ Roscommon ☐ Tipperary ☐ Tyrone ☐ Waterford ☐ Westmeath ☐ Wexford ☐ Wicklow

4. How many people attended within your party? *

☐ 1-3 ☐ 4-6 ☐ 6-9 ☐ 10-30 ☐ 30+

5. Did you eat / drink / shop in Sligo town while attending the festival? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

6. Approximately how long did you stay in town the day you visited the festival? *

☐ Less than 2 hrs ☐ 2-4 hrs ☐ 4-6 hrs ☐ More than 6 hrs

7. What was your approximate spend while in town? *

☐ Less than €50 ☐ €50-€100 ☐ More than €100

8. Did you feel safe at all times in town on the day you visited the festival? *

☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Where did you get most of your information about the event? *

☐ Social Media ☐ Billboard/Banner ☐ Word of Mouth ☐ Website

10. Any additional feedback you would like to include?

11. Email address (optional, if you would like to be entered into the draw for a Love Sligo Gift Card)

B. Post Event Business Survey

Sligo On Ice – Post Event Business Survey

Please fill this quick survey and let us know your thoughts.

1. What is the name of your business?

2. How would you classify your business?

- ☐ Retailer ☐ Accommodation Provider ☐ Food/Beverage Provider
☐ Arts/Heritage/Cultural/Tourist Provider ☐ Service Provider ☐ Other

3. Are you a day time business, night time business or both?

- ☐ Day Time ☐ Night Time ☐ Both Day Time and Night Time

4. Were you aware that the event was happening?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

5. What is the primary demographic of your audience?

- ☐ Local Customers ☐ Domestic Tourists ☐ International Tourists

6. Did you hire extra staff?

- ☐ Part Time ☐ Full Time ☐ Contract ☐ N/A

7. Did the event increase footfall to your business?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

8. Did the event divert footfall from your business?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

9. Did you participate in the event (e.g. promos, themed display, connecting activity)?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

10. If yes, please describe your promotion/activity/event:

11. On average, what did a customer typically spend in your business during the event?

- ☐ Less than €50 ☐ Less than €100 ☐ Less than €150
☐ Less than €200 ☐ Less than €250 ☐ Over €250

Other: -----

12. What percentage increase/decrease was observed in your business during the week of the event?

13. Did you feel the event was well run, safe and family friendly?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ N/A

Other: -----

14. Any additional feedback you would like to include?

C. Evening and Night Time Economy – Public Survey

We want to hear your feedback so we can keep improving your evening and night time experience in **Sligo**.

Please fill in this quick survey and let us know your thoughts (your answers will be anonymous).

Please add your email address at the bottom if you would like to be added into our draw to win a 100€ Love Sligo Gift Card.

1. How would you classify yourself? *

- ☐ **Sligo Town** Resident ☐ **Sligo County** Resident ☐ Business Owner/Employee
☐ Domestic Visitor ☐ International Visitor ☐ Other

2. What is your age group? *

- ☐ Under 18 ☐ 18–25 ☐ 26–35 ☐ 36–45 ☐ 46–55 ☐ 56–65 ☐ 66–75 ☐ 75+

3. If someone mentioned the evening and night time economy, what would you think of first? (Choose up to 3) *

- ☐ Pubs and clubs ☐ Evening/night classes ☐ Festivals and events
☐ Cafes and restaurants ☐ Sports activities/classes ☐ Shopping
☐ Work ☐ Socialising ☐ Art-based activities (comedy, theatre, music)

4. How frequently do you engage in activities in **Sligo Town** between 6pm and 6am? *

- ☐ Never ☐ Once a month ☐ Once a fortnight ☐ Once a week ☐ More than once a week

5. What activities do you participate in between 6pm and 6am? *

- ☐ Restaurant dining ☐ Cafe dining ☐ Grocery shopping ☐ Non-grocery shopping
☐ Sports evening ☐ Arts events (music, cinema, theatre) ☐ Socialising in pub
☐ Socialising in club ☐ Evening classes ☐ Exercise ☐ Other: _____

6. How satisfied are you with the following aspects in **Sligo Town**? *

(1 = Very dissatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied, N/A = Not applicable)

| Aspect | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

| Accommodation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Awareness of activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Lighting | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Transportation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Accessibility | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Venues | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Feelings of safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Family events | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

7. On average, what would you typically spend during an evening/night activity in **Sligo**? *

- ☐ Less than €50 ☐ Less than €100 ☐ Less than €150
☐ Less than €200 ☐ Less than €250 ☐ Over €250

8. What are the main challenges or barriers to participating in evening/night activities in **Sligo**? (Max 3) *

- ☐ Transport into **Sligo** ☐ Transport out of **Sligo** ☐ Lack of awareness
☐ Anti-social behaviour ☐ Feeling unsafe ☐ Lack of accessible venues/transport
☐ Lack of free time ☐ Lack of interest ☐ Too expensive

- ☐ No barriers ☐ Short opening hours ☐ Lack of family events
☐ Other: _____

9. What would you like to see prioritised for evening/night activities in Sligo? *

- ☐ Better promotion of events ☐ Extended business hours ☐ More events
☐ Use of Queen Maeve Square ☐ More opportunities for local groups
☐ More funding for community events ☐ Later transport options
☐ More safety measures ☐ More low-cost/free activities
☐ More sober events ☐ More street lighting ☐ More family activities

10. Any additional feedback?

11. Email address (optional)

(For entry into the Love Sligo Gift Card draw)

D. Evening and Night Time Economy – Business Survey

We want to hear your feedback so we can keep improving your evening and night time experience in Sligo.

Please fill in this quick, tick box survey and let us know your thoughts!

1. What is the name of your business?

2. How would you classify your business?

- ☐ Retailer ☐ Accommodation Provider ☐ Food/Beverage Provider
☐ Arts/Heritage/Cultural/Tourist Provider ☐ Service Provider ☐ Other

3. Is your business open between 6pm and 6am?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

4. If yes, how many employees work between 6pm–6am?

- ☐ 1–2 ☐ 3–5 ☐ 6–10 ☐ 10+ ☐ N/A

5. If not open during that time, would you be interested in extending your hours?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

6. If not open, what are the main barriers?

- ☐ Staff Costs ☐ Low Demand ☐ Not enough profit potential
☐ Low footfall ☐ Safety Concerns ☐ Licensing/Regulation/Insurance
☐ Funding source needed ☐ Other: _____

7. How satisfied are you with the following aspects in Sligo Town?

(1 = Very dissatisfied, 5 = Very satisfied, N/A = Not applicable)

| Aspect | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | N/A |

|-----|---|---|---|---|---|-----|

| Accommodation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Awareness of activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Lighting | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Transportation | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Accessibility | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Venues | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Activities | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Feeling of safety | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

| Family events | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

8. On average, what would a customer typically spend during an evening/night activity in your business?

☐ Less than €50 ☐ Less than €100 ☐ Less than €150

☐ Less than €200 ☐ Less than €250 ☐ Over €250

9. What are the main challenges or barriers to participating in evening/night activities in Sligo? (Max 3)

☐ Transport into Sligo ☐ Transport out of Sligo ☐ Lack of awareness

☐ Anti-social behaviour ☐ Feeling unsafe ☐ Lack of accessible venues/transport

☐ Lack of free time ☐ Lack of interest ☐ Too expensive

☐ No barriers ☐ Short opening hours ☐ Lack of family events

☐ Competition from neighbouring towns ☐ Other: _____

10. What would you like to see prioritised for evening/night activities in Sligo? (Max 3)

☐ Better promotion of events ☐ Increased events and activities

☐ Use of Queen Maeve Square ☐ More opportunities for local groups

☐ More funding for community events ☐ Later transport options

☐ More safety measures ☐ More low-cost/free activities

☐ More sober events ☐ More street lighting ☐ More family activities

☐ More street animation ☐ Increased accessibility

☐ Dedicated funding for night-time events ☐ Marketing support for event hosts

11. What support or training would interest you to help your business in the evening/night context?

(e.g. safety training like Ask for Angela, social media training, festival/event planning)

12. Would you be interested in participating in a future evening market?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Maybe

13. Any additional feedback?

Resources

- [Cities@Heart Network Page](#) : This URBACT page gathers all the material related to the Cities@Heart Journey (2023 – 2025) including outputs, articles, quarterly network reports and useful links.
- [URBACT Toolbox](#) : The URBACT Toolbox has everything cities need to design and implement integrated and participatory actions. Discover guidance, tools, templates, prompts, explainers and much more to find your way when tackling urban challenges. The Toolbox is organised into the five stages of the action-planning cycle and the crosscutting actions of engaging stakeholders and sharing knowledge.
- [City Centre Doctors](#) : This URBACT network worked on developing actions to strengthen the revitalisation of their city centres (which is often the nexus for social, cultural and, ultimately, economic local development).
- [Making Space for Citizen Dialogue](#) : This manual is a restitution of the work conducted by the Greater Paris Metropolis Urban Local Group. It presents 5 ways to involve citizens in city centre projects.
- [Sligo Evening and Night Time Economy Action Plan](#) : The Night-Time Economy (NTE) is a very important sector as a contributor to the economic, cultural and creative sectors. To realise the full potential of the night time economy that benefits the residents, visitors and local businesses and community groups, key stakeholders have designed this dedicated action plan.
- [Irish Place-Standard-Tool-Booklet.pdf](#) : This booklet offers a tool for assessing the quality of a place, which can be a useful resource for analysing your city's strengths based on various criteria. Although it was developed in the Irish context, it can be applied to other European cities.
- [Ecological Guidelines in Cesena](#) : In 2024, Cesena approved Guidelines for Environmental Offsetting and Ecological Compensations to guide practitioners with sustainability metrics in their public infrastructure and regeneration projects.

Credits

Publication management

Greater Paris Metropolis

Editing

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Define your city centre's SWOT : Léonie Yang (Greater Paris Metropolis)

Your city centre transformation checklist : Mar Santamaria, Cities@Heart Partners

Analyse residential and commercial uses : Brian Flynn, Edel Doran, Gail McGibbon (Sligo County Council and BID)

Attract entrepreneurs : Larisa Potokar, Naja Zupancic, Tadeja Falnoga, (Celje)

Activate your vacant premises : Larisa Potokar, Naja Zupancic, Tadeja Falnoga (Celje), Angélique Crucilla, Manon Lambert (Fleurus)

Organize events : Elena Giovannini, Michela Ghetti (Cesena)

Measure footfall : Brian Flynn, Edel Doran, Gail McGibbon (Sligo County Council and BID)

Experiment traffic pacification : Maria Piatkowska (Krakow Metropolis)

Create a sense of place : Anna Uttaro (Cesena)

Understand city centre users' expectations : Brian Flynn, Edel Doran, Gail McGibbon (Sligo County Council and BID)

With the collaboration of our partners

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You are welcome to get in touch with the participating cities for additional insights (final page of the Cities@Heart playbook).

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