



CENTO INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

URBACT



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COMUNE DI CENTO



Table of Contents

03

Introduction

04

Section 1

Local context, challenges and strategic vision

11

1.1.

Problems and Needs

13

1.2.

Vision

14

1.3.

The ULG

18

Section 2

Strategic Objectives and Integrated Logic

19

2.1.

Strategic Objectives

21

2.2.

Integrated Logic

23

Section 3

Testing Actions and Action Plan

35

Section 4

Implementation framework

36

4.1.

Governance

37

4.2.

Stakeholders' engagement

38

4.3.

Funding strategy

39

4.4.

Risks Analysis and mitigation strategies

40

4.5.

Overall Timeline

41

4.6.

Monitoring and Reporting

43

4.7.

Communication Strategy

Introduction

The "PUMA" Project (Plans for Urban Mobility Actions) is an initiative funded by the URBACT IV program, aimed at promoting the adoption of innovative strategies for sustainable urban mobility in European cities. The main objective of "PUMA" is to improve the quality of urban life through an integrated approach to mobility planning, fostering environmentally friendly, inclusive, and accessible solutions for citizens. The project, which includes the Municipality of Cento as a partner, brings together a network of European cities working collaboratively to exchange experiences, knowledge, and solutions to address urban mobility challenges. The participating partners are:

- Liepaja (Latvia)
- Dienvidkurzeme (Latvia)
- Nova Gorica (Slovenia)
- Gdansk (Poland)
- Villadecans (Spain)
- Larissa (Greece)
- Taurage (Lithuania)
- University of Zagreb (Croatia)

Each project partner brings a unique set of experiences and operates within different contexts in terms of urban planning and mobility. The project focuses on various areas, including the promotion of public transportation, the adoption of active mobility solutions such as cycling and walking, and the reduction of the environmental impact of urban infrastructure.

One of the distinctive features of PUMA is its ability to integrate environmental sustainability needs with the social and economic requirements of cities, creating mobility models that are equitable and easily adaptable to different contexts.

Within this framework, the Municipality of Cento has strongly committed to the project's objectives, acknowledging the importance of transforming the local mobility system into a key component of both citizen wellbeing and environmental protection.

The Municipality is actively using the knowledge and experiences gained through its participation in PUMA to develop its first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP), a crucial document to guide the city's future development in a greener, more inclusive, and more sustainable direction.

Cento's SUMP will primarily aim to reduce private car use by promoting alternative and sustainable transport solutions, such as public transportation and active mobility. Additionally, it will encourage more ecological modes of transport and the enhancement of urban spaces dedicated to soft mobility.

This plan marks a turning point in the city's urban planning and will be structured in alignment with national and European regulations and frameworks, such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and PAIR 2030, in order to meet broader sustainability and inclusion goals.

By adopting an integrated and innovative approach, the Municipality of Cento aims to transform its urban mobility system into an ecological, virtuous, and inclusive model, enhancing the quality of life for its citizens and contributing to the fight against climate change. The SUMP thus becomes not only a planning tool, but a concrete opportunity for lasting and positive change for the city.

Section 1

Local context, challenges and strategic vision



Location, territorial context:

Country: Italy

Region: Emilia-Romagna

Province: Ferrara

Total area: 64.74 km²

Population: 35,551 inhabitants

Population density: 545 inhabitants per km²

Foreign Residents

Total foreign residents: 4,014 (11.3% of the total population)

Main foreign communities:

- Morocco – 24.9%
- Pakistan – 16.2%
- Romania – 14.2%
- Albania – 8.4%
- China – 7.0%

Demographic Profile

Male residents: 17,411

Female residents: 18,140

Average age: 45.62 years

Age distribution:

- 0–14 years: 13.76%
- 15–64 years: 63.35%
- 65+ years: 22.88%

Households

Total households: 15,009

Average household size: 2.4 persons

Key Economic Sectors

- Mechanical engineering
- Engine manufacturing
- Manufacturing industry
- Agriculture and food processing sector

Urban Area

The municipality consists of one main urban center (Cento) where only the 49% of the entire population lives and nine surrounding hamlets:

Renazzo, Corporeno, Dodici Morelli, Buonacompra, Casumaro, Molino Albergati, Alberone, Reno Centese, and Bevilacqua.

Road Network

The Municipality of Cento is located along the important SP.66 route, which connects Modena and Ferrara (formerly SS.255). This route diagonally crosses the territory between two major motorways:

- A22 (Modena–Brennero)
- A13 (Bologna–Padua)

SP.66 serves as a strategic corridor between Modena and Ferrara. Due to its position and alignment, it effectively competes with the motorway network, attracting both local and long-distance traffic. The planned construction of the Cispadana regional motorway, particularly with the toll gate at Pilastrello, is expected to further increase the route's attractiveness and traffic volume.

A second important interprovincial axis crosses Cento, connecting:

- the province of Rovigo (Badia Polesine)
- San Giovanni in Persiceto, via the Po River bridge at Ficarolo

This route passes through Bondeno and Finale Emilia, affecting the western hamlets of Cento along Via Riga, including Alberone, Dodici Morelli, and Bevilacqua. Similarly, the completion of the Cispadana motorway could divert some traffic from this axis toward the Bondeno–Pilastrello route, passing through Casumaro and the Bondenese road system.

Rail Network

One of the main weaknesses in Cento's accessibility system is its relative distance from the main railway corridors, which can only be accessed indirectly via routes over 10 km long.

More specifically:

- 14.5 km to San Giovanni in Persiceto, on the S3 line to Poggio Rusco;
- 13 km to San Pietro in Casale, on the S4 line to Ferrara, which is connected and coordinated with the Cento/San Pietro FS line (line 455).

Both stations are served by fast regional services and Bologna Metropolitan Railway (SFM) connections. Although less frequented than San Giovanni, the station at San Giorgio di Piano is also worth mentioning, accessible from Cento via the bus line 97 to Bologna. However, the proximity to Bologna makes the bus + train interchange less competitive, as the travel time for line 455/S4 is approximately 75 minutes, compared to 60 minutes by bus, guaranteed by the 97 bus line. Travel times by bus + train and entirely by bus to Ferrara are nearly equivalent.

The car + train interchange is certainly more attractive, given the greater difficulty of circulation and parking in both city centers.

Road-Based Public Transport (TPL)

As previously mentioned, accessibility to Cento by public transport primarily relies on the road network, particularly on lines 550 towards Ferrara, 551/552 towards Modena, and 97C towards Bologna.

The service provided is of good quality, generally scheduled every 30 minutes, and is made recognizable by the presence of the bus station hub where all the lines converge.

The situation is different in the rural hamlets, which are mainly served by school transportation services and unstructured routes, with the only exceptions being Corporeno, served by line 550 to Ferrara, and XXII Morelli and Renazzo, served by line 364 to Bondeno. The service offered by line 361, in addition to being infrequent (8 pairs of trips per day), stops at Finale Emilia without reaching Cento. The table below lists the lines that, according to the 2023 winter timetable, provide an adequate level of service to cover the entire day, offering at least 8 pairs of trips per day.

Among the main objectives outlined in the new SUMP are:

- Increase the effectiveness of services with regular timetabling at 30-minute or 60-minute intervals, with enhancements up to 15-minute frequencies on routes and time slots with higher demand, particularly in the Bologna urban area;
- Improve the quality and capacity of vehicles;
- Enhance the integration between different transport systems, promoting interchange;
- Improve the quality and accessibility of stations and stops;
- Improve the level of information for passengers at all stations and stops.



Bus line	Bus trips in a day	Links	Hamlets served
97C	25	Bologna/ Cento	None
364	14	Bondeno/Cento	Dodici Morelli, Renazzo
455/456	30	San Pietro in Casale/Cento	None
550	23	Cento/Ferrara	Corporeno
551	24	Cento/Modena	None
552	8	Cento/Modena	None

Cyclability

Actions for cycling according to the PRIT (Regional Transport and Mobility Plan) are directed as follows:

Urban areas:

- Identification, construction, redevelopment, and enhancement of the cycling network.
- Verification and securing of critical points and pedestrian-cyclist crossings.
- Emphasis on route continuity and recognizability, particularly signage and intermodality.

Extra-urban areas:

- Consolidation of a network offering an effective modal alternative for medium-distance travel.
- Attention to traffic safety and the protection/enhancement of the landscape.

In this context, the PRIT identifies the **Regional Cycling Routes (RCR)**, integrated into the main European (Eurovelo) and National (Bicitalia) networks. These routes form the reference framework for detailed planning, allocation of regional resources, and guidance for local authorities' projects.

Cento is directly connected by the **ER19 "Ciclovia del Reno" (Reno River Cycle Path)**, running from Bologna to the Adriatic through Cento, Molinella, and Argenta. The **ER19d branch**, toward Bondeno and the Po River from Sant'Agostino, intersects with Bicitalia Route 2 and Eurovelo Route 8.

South of Cento, at Castello d'Argile, the Reno Cycle Path intersects with the **ER6 "Ciclovia di Mezzo"**, running between Piacenza and Ravenna. Cento and its surrounding areas are part of the PRIT's **"Local Excellence Circuits."**

The PRIT also emphasizes bicycle accessibility to train stations and stops. For Cento, this is somewhat marginal due to the 10 km distance to railway stations. However, e-bikes make these distances manageable if comfortable and safe routes, along with suitable bike parking, are provided.

The cycling system in Cento must serve different user profiles:

Internal trips within urban areas:

- Urban areas vary in size and morphology, requiring tailored solutions.
- Needs range from securing crossings along roads where local services are concentrated, to creating hierarchical networks connecting urban attractions.
- In Cento's central area, bike paths along **Via Giovannina**, **Via Ferrarese**, and the inner circular route (Viale Gallerani to the Hospital) serve this function.
- Rural hamlets currently have limited cycling infrastructure, except for a short protected lane along the final stretch of **Via Bondenese** into Casumaro.

Connections between urban areas:

- Needed to reach services unavailable in residential areas.
- Main goal: link areas with neighboring ones, particularly if they differ in size or function.
- Strong connections define a large-area network, especially within a 5–6 km radius.
- Regular roads are often dangerous due to narrow lanes; dedicated paths alongside major roads are necessary.
- Current connections include:
 - Renazzo–Cento:** Via Alberelli, Nuova, and Ferrarese;
 - Corporeno–outskirts of Cento:** SP.66 and Via di Mezzo (up to Via Fratelli Bandiera)
 - P.te Dosso/Dosso–Cento and Sant'Agostino:** via the Reno route

Naturalistic–recreational routes:

- Mainly connected to the Reno River system and the Napoleon Canal.
- Ensure connections between Cento, Bondeno (and Po River paths), Ferrara, and the Ferrara Lidi (beaches).

The Integrated Regional Air Plan

In compliance with Directive 2008/50/EC on air quality in Europe and Legislative Decree 155/2010 implementing it, the Regions are tasked with approving regional air quality plans, with the main objective of identifying concrete actions to improve air quality and reduce pollutant levels in the territory.

The **Integrated Regional Air Plan (PAIR 2030)** for Emilia-Romagna was approved by the Legislative Assembly on January 30, 2024, and came into force in early February 2024. The plan acknowledges that meeting the established air quality standards requires integrated action across all sectors contributing to air pollution, as well as addressing climate change. It also involves implementing coordinated policies and actions at various levels (local, regional, national). At the local level, the PAIR focuses on areas with populations over 30,000, including the Municipality of Cento.

Compared to the baseline scenario of 2017, the plan aims to reduce the main pollutants according to the following targets:

- 13% PM10
- 13% PM2.5
- 12% nitrogen oxides (NOx)
- 29% ammonia (NH3)
- 6% volatile organic compounds (VOC)
- 13% sulfur dioxide (SO2)

Achieving these targets is scheduled through various measures that cover 8 different intervention areas, including Transport and Mobility, and Urban and Plain Areas. The transport sector is identified as one of the primary contributors to air pollution in the region, especially in terms of PM10, NOx, and VOC production. Several actions have already been taken to encourage and promote sustainable mobility in urban areas, such as the **Bike to Work** project, which was launched under the PAIR 2020 and has already been established.

In line with the first **Bike to Work** program, funds will be allocated under PAIR 2030 for the construction of bike lanes and incentives for the purchase of bicycles or electric scooters.

The PAIR sets an important target related to modal share, distinguishing private vehicle usage percentages based on the characteristics of the municipality in question. This target is directly linked to the reduction of vehicle flows.

The main measures to achieve these objectives include mobility actions such as:

- Restrictions on the circulation of the most polluting vehicles
- Expansion of Limited Traffic Zones (ZTL) and pedestrian areas
- Management of parking spaces
- Establishment of 30 km/h zones
- Expansion of the cycling network
- Increase in school-to-home routes
- Increase in preferential lanes and promotion of public transport

These measures outlined by the PAIR must be incorporated into local planning instruments, which must ensure their implementation and monitoring.

Another objective closely tied to the proposed modal shift is the increase in cycling mobility, which is also a key regional goal for 2025. Actions to achieve this goal include:

- Creation of a continuous and high-quality cycling network.
- Improvement of the flow of cycling routes with traffic light adjustments and safe crossings.
- Widespread installation of bike racks and secure bike parking in urban areas
- Enhanced intermodality between bikes and public transport.
- Creation of measures that facilitate harmonious coexistence between various means of transportation through traffic moderation.
- Introduction of roads with cycling-pedestrian priority, dedicated bike lanes, and promotion of e-bike sharing schemes.

The PAIR also stresses that any air quality policy will be ineffective unless accompanied by adequate strategies for promoting and enhancing public transport. Measures to support the development of public transport include:

- Creation of bus lanes and signal prioritization to make public transport more competitive compared to private cars
- Fleet renewal
- Fare integration
- Digitalization of services
- Development of intermodality.

Other measures mentioned in the PAIR for reducing pollutants include **mobility management policies**, with particular focus on the development of corporate and area-based mobility managers to directly address systematic commutes (home-to-school and home-to-work travel). Lastly, the PAIR includes actions related to the development of electric mobility, promoting the renewal of vehicle fleets, and encouraging less polluting driving styles through **eco-driving** principles.

National and Regional Strategies for Sustainable and Intermodal Mobility in Italy and Emilia-Romagna region

Italy, in alignment with European directives and climate objectives, has been increasingly prioritizing sustainable mobility strategies aimed at reducing environmental impacts and improving public health. At the national level, the *Piano Generale della Mobilità Ciclistica* (General Plan for Cycling Mobility), the *Piano Nazionale Integrato per l'Energia e il Clima* (PNIEC), and the *Strategia Nazionale per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile* (SNSvS) outline a comprehensive framework to promote active transport (walking and cycling), enhance public transport efficiency, and shift away from dependence on private motorized vehicles. These policies emphasize the development of intermodal hubs, integration of cycling with rail and bus systems, incentives for e-mobility, and low-emission zones in urban areas.

At the regional level, Emilia-Romagna has emerged as a leader in sustainable transport innovation. The *Piano Regionale Integrato dei Trasporti* (PRIT) and the *Piano Aria Integrato Regionale* (PAIR 2030) focus on coordinated policies to decarbonize mobility, particularly in densely populated or polluted areas. The region is actively expanding its network of regional cycling routes (RCR), including connections with the European EuroVelo and national Bicalitalia routes, and improving cycling infrastructure near train stations to facilitate seamless multimodal travel.

Investments in public transport include electrification of bus fleets, extension of suburban rail services (SFM), and development of park-and-ride facilities to discourage car use in city centers.

A growing emphasis is placed on *slow mobility* (mobilità lenta), which prioritizes human-scale, environmentally friendly modes of transport such as walking, cycling, and e-scooters. These strategies aim to enhance urban livability and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion, and air pollutants such as PM10 and NOx. Furthermore, local planning tools like Urban Sustainable Mobility Plans (PUMS) are required to align with regional and national objectives, integrating policies on traffic moderation, active mobility infrastructure, and digital mobility services. Together, these multi-level strategies reflect a clear shift towards a sustainable, integrated, and inclusive transport system that fosters modal shift and environmental quality while promoting healthier lifestyles.



1.1. Problems and Needs

Understanding the mobility challenges in the Municipality of Cento has required a multi-layered approach, combining technical analysis with the direct input of the local community. The identification of key problems and needs is the result of both an in-depth research and data collection process carried out by the Municipality within the PUMA project, and the invaluable contributions gathered through regular meetings of the URBACT Local Group (ULG). The involvement of citizens and stakeholders has been essential not only in validating the findings, but also in bringing to light everyday mobility issues that may not be immediately visible through data alone. Their lived experiences, concerns and ideas have provided a human perspective to complement the technical understanding of Cento's mobility landscape.

Among the main issues identified, the lack of a fast, affordable and reliable public transport system stands out. Residents often face difficulties in accessing services or reaching destinations without using a private car. This is particularly critical in a context where the car remains the default mode of transport, deeply rooted in local habits and perceived as the only viable option. A significant concern raised by stakeholders is the absence of a more flexible transport system, such as on-demand public transport, which could better address the specific needs of more vulnerable user groups — including elderly people, foreign women, people with disabilities, and workers without private vehicles.

Another major gap lies in the limited availability of shared mobility solutions.

Services such as car sharing or bike sharing are currently nonexistent in Cento restricting opportunities for sustainable and inclusive travel, particularly for those without access to private transport.

Additionally, the absence of a railway line

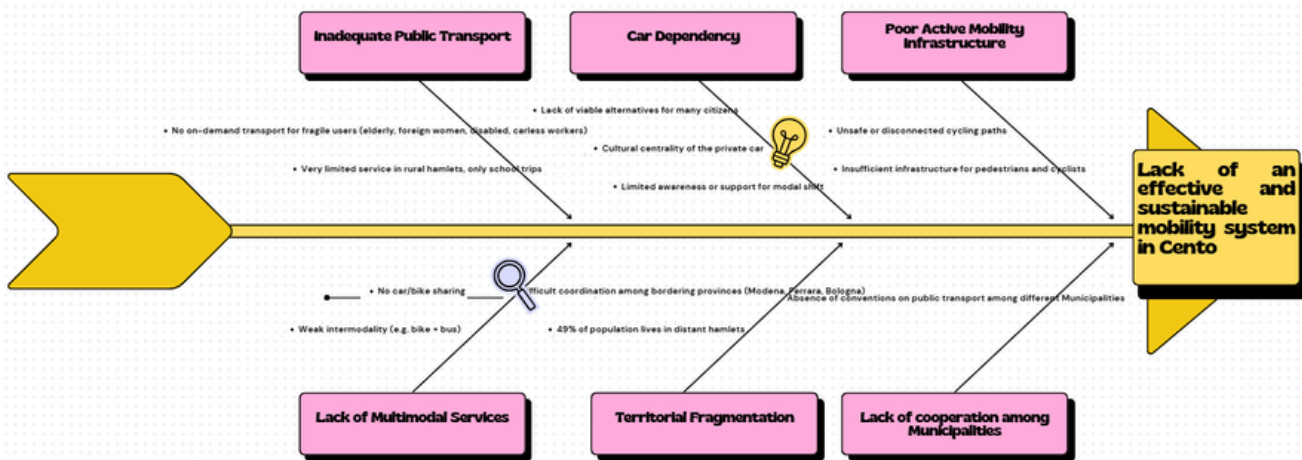
connecting Cento to surrounding cities further isolates the municipality from broader regional mobility networks. Coordination issues between municipalities and provinces (especially Modena, Ferrara, and Bologna) have also emerged as a recurring challenge, making it difficult to implement effective, integrated transport strategies at the territorial scale.

The geographical layout of Cento represents a structural issue in itself. While the city centre hosts key services and facilities, nearly half of the population lives in one of the nine surrounding hamlets, some of which are located several kilometres away. These areas are poorly served by public transport, with services often limited to school-time bus routes during the academic year. For the rest of the day — and during school holidays — residents have no real alternative to the car for reaching essential destinations, both within Cento and in nearby towns. This lack of connectivity becomes a serious barrier to social and economic inclusion, especially for those who most rely on public services, such as seniors and foreign residents. It affects access to healthcare, public offices, libraries, senior centres, and job opportunities.

Lastly, the cycling infrastructure, although supported by a strong local cycling culture, remains fragmented and insufficient. Citizens frequently report a sense of insecurity when using bicycles, particularly due to the lack of protected and continuous bike lanes linking the hamlets to the city centre and facilitating safe travel within the town itself. This perception is supported by data and recent accidents, which highlight the risks faced by pedestrians and cyclists in the current road system. Addressing these safety concerns, and ensuring that active mobility becomes a real and viable alternative, is crucial in moving toward a more inclusive and sustainable urban mobility model.

Fishbone diagram

Causes → Effect



Swot analysis

The following SWOT analysis diagram is the result of several ULG meetings, during which ULG members and local stakeholders expressed their perspectives on the mobility system in Cento, analyzing from different viewpoints the internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as the potential opportunities and threats arising from the context.



STRENGTHS

- Implementation of the IAP and SUMP during the same period, supported by strong political commitment to improving Cento's mobility system;
- Active involvement of key local and regional stakeholders
- High popularity of cycling as a means of transport among citizens;
- Presence of a core structure of bike lanes and pedestrian zones



OPPORTUNITIES

- Access to European and national funding opportunities (e.g. Horizon Europe, EUI, LIFE) to improve Cento's mobility system
- Possibility to establish cooperation with the European network of cities working on sustainable mobility, fostering exchange of best practices, access to innovative solutions, and greater international visibility;

WEAKNESSES



- Presence of 11 hamlets located far from the city center;
- Peculiar geographic position at the intersection of three provinces;
- Lack of cooperation with neighboring municipalities;
- Dominance of private car use in the local culture;

THREATS



- Local elections and potential change in priorities of the new administration;
- Cultural barriers and strong opposition from citizens to specific measures (e.g. creation of pedestrian zones, speed limits for cars, etc.)
- Reduction of the municipal budget allocated to the implementation of the SUMP;

1.2. Vision

Overall Vision: “Visioning the future, wich kind of mobility system we want in Cento?”

Specifically, the vision for the future of mobility in Cento is rooted in the desire to build a more sustainable, inclusive, and citizen-centred territory. In the medium and long term, Cento aims to reverse the long-standing dominance of private car use, replacing it with a system that puts people — especially the most vulnerable groups such as the elderly, people with disabilities, foreign residents, and those without private vehicles — at the heart of mobility planning. The town envisions a shift towards a green and accessible mobility system, where every citizen can move freely and safely for work, education, healthcare, social interaction, and leisure. This transformation means embracing **slow mobility** as a core principle, promoting the use of bicycles, walking, and electric micro-mobility (e.g. e-scooters), supported by a network of safe and continuous cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

At the same time, Cento will invest in strengthening and modernising its public transport services, with a focus on urban and on-demand transport solutions that are flexible, efficient, and aligned with the

specific needs of residents and the territorial layout — especially the many outlying frazioni that house nearly half of the local population.

The long-term ambition is clear: to create a mobility ecosystem that is environmentally responsible, socially equitable, and functionally integrated — one that enhances quality of life, ensures full access to services and opportunities, and contributes to a more connected and resilient Cento.



1.3. The ULG

Setting up the Urbact Local Group (ULG)

The integrated approach to sustainable urban development promoted by URBACT builds on the participation of key local stakeholders in policy-making and delivery. Developing partnerships involving local authorities (including different departments within the local administration), beneficiaries/ users, NGOs, public agencies, the private sector and the civil society (citizens and inhabitants) has proven to be a key component in the design and implementation of efficient urban policies. Every city partner in an URBACT network is required to set up an URBACT Local Group (ULG) that brings together all relevant stakeholders having a stake in the policy challenge addressed by the city. The main objective of the ULG is to bring around the table the different interests at stake and different perspectives to frame problems and agree policy priorities, and design concrete solutions so as to address these problems in the most efficient way. Each partner city involved in an URBACT network needs to set up what is called an URBACT Local Group (ULG). Its composition is heterogeneous and include, usually: civil servants, elected officials, NGOs & associations, private sector (entrepreneurs, shop owners, etc.), academia (researchers, professors, etc.) and of course, citizens. Each ULG is composed in a unique way. It's up to each city to define who should be part of it based on the challenge they're trying to tackle.

The Role of the Urbact Local Group (ULG) in Cento

Given the inherently cross-sectoral and complex nature of urban mobility, which impacts environmental sustainability, social inclusion, economic development, and daily logistics, the Municipality of Cento recognised early on the need for a participatory and inclusive approach in the PUMA project. The creation of the URBACT Local Group (ULG) was a pivotal step in this direction, designed to bring together a diverse spectrum of local stakeholders, ensuring that every voice—from public institutions to private actors, from civil society organisations to grassroots associations, and individual citizens—was heard and valued.

In particular, the Municipality of Cento considered it fundamental to involve "fragile" and often "marginalised groups within the ULG, such as migrant women, young people, and students. The decision to engage these specific categories was driven by the recognition that, when addressing such a universal and transversal issue as mobility, it is crucial to listen to the perspectives, understand the needs, and gather feedback from those who are often the most vulnerable in mobility-related decisions.

These groups, who typically do not own cars or driving licenses, face particular challenges in their daily commutes, often relying solely on public transport or personal means like bicycles or walking.

Their experiences are central to understanding the real barriers and gaps in the current mobility system. This approach of involving marginalised groups brought a new, essential dimension to the planning process. The insights and concerns raised by these stakeholders provided the Municipality of Cento with valuable input, ensuring that the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) would be not only technically viable but also socially inclusive, addressing the needs of all citizens, especially those who are often left behind in traditional policy-making processes.

This diversity of viewpoints within the ULG allowed the Municipality to move beyond a purely technical, top-down approach and instead embrace a more holistic, community-driven model. The ULG became both a sounding board and a co-design space, where participants were encouraged to bring their ideas, needs, and suggestions into the process. The collective input facilitated the co-creation of the Integrated Action Plan, ensuring that the actions proposed were not only technically coherent but also socially legitimate and deeply rooted in the local context. This inclusivity helped align the project with the needs, priorities, and aspirations of Cento's residents and stakeholders, generating solutions that were widely supported and capable of delivering sustainable impact. Furthermore, the dynamic nature of the ULG ensured that ongoing discussions were shaped by a continuous learning process, where feedback loops and iterative testing allowed the group to refine ideas and adapt strategies based on real-time feedback. As such, the ULG was instrumental in transforming the PUMA project into a truly participatory policy exercise, one that empowered local citizens to actively shape the mobility policies that directly affect their daily lives.

In conclusion, the ULG's role transcended that of a mere advisory body.

It became a crucial catalyst for collective

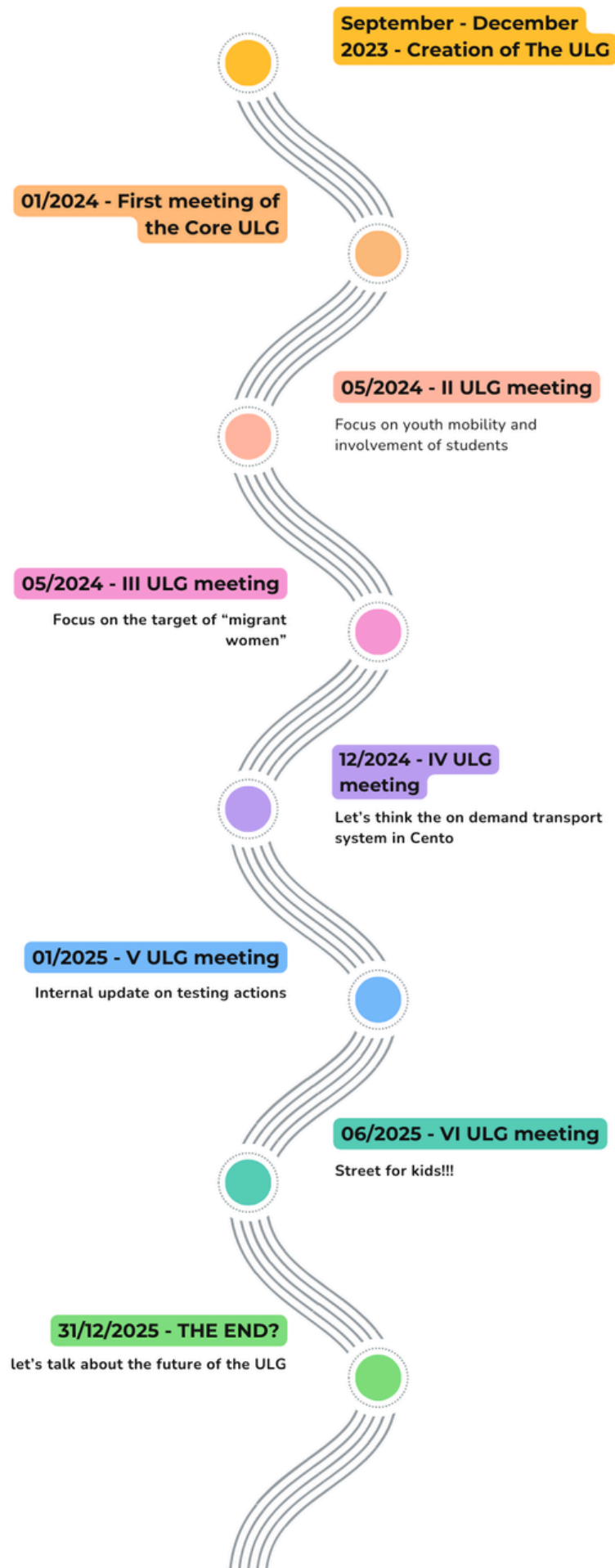
learning, promoting the development of solutions that are both innovative and socially sustainable, while ensuring that the Integrated Action Plan reflects the shared vision of the Cento community. The involvement of fragile and marginalised groups was, without a doubt, a rich resource that provided indispensable insights for both the development of the IAP and the implementation of the testing actions.



Composition of the Urbact Local Group (ULG) Cento Municipality

CATEGORY	STAKEHOLDERS/PARTICIPANTS
Public Entities	• Municipality of Cento (European Projects Department, Mobility Office and Planning Department, Youth Center Department); • Local Police Department • Local Health Authority (AUSL- Cento) • Local Schools (Primary & Secondary Levels) • Provincial Transport Authority "AMI" • Bordering municipalities: Ferrara, Pieve di Cento, Poggio Renatico, Finale Emilia • University of Ferrara
Citizens	• Residents from Cento and the surrounding hamlets • Youth representatives • Elderly citizens • Representatives of foregin women residing in Cento
Associations	• Strade APS • Tarari Tararera APS • Fondazione Zanandrea • Confcooperative FE
Private Sector	• Local transport companies (Viaggiare Srl) • Polinomia Srl • Se.Cis Srl • Redas Engineering

ULG TIMELINE



Section 2

Strategic Objectives and Integrated Logic

2.1. Strategic Objectives

In order to make the overall vision a tangible and achievable goal, the Integrated Action Plan defines a set of strategic objectives that guide the transformation of the local mobility system over the coming years. These objectives translate the vision into specific, actionable priorities, providing a framework for decision-making, resource allocation, and stakeholder coordination. They are aligned with the overarching ambition of reducing car dependency by offering citizens equally convenient, sustainable, and inclusive alternatives—

particularly in a territory like Cento, where the current structure heavily relies on private vehicles due to weak transport connections and car-centric cultural norms.

Each objective plays a key role in shifting behavioral patterns, improving infrastructure, and fostering an urban environment where sustainable mobility is both possible and preferable. The objectives are structured around four main pillars:

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CHALLENGES ADDRESSED	LINK TO VISION	LINK TO THE ACTIONS PLAN
1. Enhance efficiency and attractiveness of public transport	Weak transport connections, irregular services, low accessibility for vulnerable groups	Supports the vision by offering safe, green, and inclusive alternatives to private cars, enabling free and secure movement for all citizens	• Action 1: Establishment of a Permanent Contact Point to Support Fragile Citizens in Accessing Public Transport Passes” • Action 2: Development of an On-Demand Public Transport System in Cento and Bordering Municipalities • Action 5: Creation of Secured Bike Parking at Cento Bus Station for Intermodal Mobility
2. Upgrade infrastructure for slow and sustainable mobility	Unsafe or incomplete cycling/pedestrian paths, car-centric urban spaces	Advances a connected and resilient mobility system where walking and cycling are safe, convenient, and appealing	• Action 3: Renovation of Municipality Bike Lanes for Cyclo tourists • Action 4: Bike to Work Program for Municipal Employees • Action 5: Creation of Secured Bike Parking at Cento Bus Station for Intermodal Mobility • Action 6: Creation of Low- Traffic and Pedestrian Priority Zones in the Historic Center of Cento

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	CHALLENGES ADDRESSED	LINK TO VISION	LINK TO THE ACTIONS PLAN
3. Promote a cultural shift towards sustainable mobility	Habitual car use, low awareness of environmental/health impacts	Aligns with the vision by fostering sustainable behaviours and reinforcing mobility as a core civic value	• Action 4: Bike to Work Program for Municipal Employees; • Action 6: Creation of Low-Traffic and Pedestrian Priority Zones in the Historic Center of Cento; • Action 7: Formative workshop about mobility in the schools.
4. Build an inclusive, citizen-centred mobility ecosystem	Underrepresentation of vulnerable groups, fragmented governance, lack of co-design	Contributes to the vision by ensuring equitable access, participation, and collaboration , improving quality of life and community cohesion	All actions

2.2. Integrated Logic

In designing the Integrated Action Plan (IAP), the Municipality of Cento has followed a multi-level and cross-sectoral approach to ensure the coherence, feasibility and sustainability of the actions planned. The integration principle – central to the URBACT method – has been addressed through various dimensions:

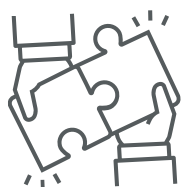
Vertical Integration



The municipality has engaged in coordination efforts with higher levels of governance, including the Emilia-Romagna Region and the Province of Ferrara.

Meetings and consultations have ensured that local priorities align with regional planning instruments, particularly regarding sustainable mobility and urban regeneration policies. For instance, the integration with the Piano Urbano della Mobilità Sostenibile (PUMS) at regional level supports the scalability and funding potential of actions in the IAP.

Horizontal Integration



Internal collaboration across municipal departments has been a key element of the IAP development process. Planning, Mobility, Environmental Services, Social Services, Cultural Heritage and Tourism departments have all contributed to shaping integrated actions.

In particular, the European Projects Office has played a transversal and strategic role, supporting all relevant departments in identifying opportunities for direct and indirect EU funding to support or co-finance the planned interventions.

Moreover, cooperation with the Culture and Tourism departments has been essential in designing and promoting cycling tourism routes, which combine sustainable mobility with heritage valorization and local economic development.

Participatory Integration



Through the URBACT Local Group (ULG), the municipality has engaged a wide range of stakeholders including residents, local businesses, schools, NGOs, and mobility operators. Co-creation workshops and public consultations allowed the integration of local knowledge and needs into the planning process.

Importantly, the municipality is committed to preserving and evolving the ULG structure and spirit even after the end of the URBACT project, in order to keep future interventions on mobility and public space as participatory as possible. Continuous dialogue with citizens, and systematic collection of feedback and constructive input, will be central in shaping actions that affect public space usability and urban accessibility.

Thematic Integration



The IAP integrates environmental, social, and economic goals, ensuring that no action is pursued in isolation. A key focus of the plan is on mobility as a driver for social and economic inclusion, particularly for the most vulnerable citizens.

By enhancing sustainable transport options, accessibility and connection across the urban fabric, the plan aims to empower disadvantaged groups, reduce barriers, and foster equal opportunities in access to services, jobs, education and culture.

Territorial Integration



Cento's unique territorial position — located at the intersection of three provinces: Ferrara, Modena and Bologna — makes territorial integration a top priority. The IAP promotes continuous cooperation not only with neighbouring municipalities, but also with public transport agencies across all three provinces, in order to improve interprovincial connectivity.

The goal is to deliver efficient and sustainable mobility solutions capable of responding to the needs of thousands of daily commuters who travel for work, study, and essential services between Cento and surrounding urban areas.

Section 3

Testing Actions and Action Plan

The testing actions: “The on the ground experimentations”

What is a testing action?

A testing action is an experimentation. It is an idea or a concept, perhaps already tried in another city, which can be tested to check the relevance, feasibility and added value of its implementation in different local contexts.

The testing actions are limited in time, scale and space and by their nature have the right to fail. Cities will be able to learn from these tests, measure the results and either adapt, upscale or reject actions to be included in the Integrated Action Plan based on this experience.

A testing action is an experiment aiming at being a Proof of Concept. A Proof of Concept is an evidence, typically deriving from an experiment which demonstrates that an idea/concept is relevant, feasible and meaningful. The principle is to ‘try out’ an idea in order to see if ‘it makes sense and eventually works’. Within “PUMA”, the testing action allowed us to try out some concepts in order to see the effects they produced but also potentially pre-identify potential future actions to be integrated in the IAP.

SURVEY

How do you move in Cento?

Objective

Collect, for the first time in Cento, direct feedback from citizens on mobility habits, system shortcomings, future expectations, and overall satisfaction.

Activities

- Design and dissemination of an online mobility questionnaire;
- Data collection (July–November 2024);
- Data analysis using descriptive and comparative statistical methods.

Partners

- Local associations and organizations;
- Provincial Agency for Mobility (AMI);
- Schools and educational institutions of Cento.

Timeframe

July – November 2024

Outcome

- 462 respondents completed the questionnaire;
- Insights from vulnerable and underrepresented groups: women, youths (<19), elderly (65+), large families, residents in hamlets/rural areas;
- Identification of key needs and priorities for sustainable and inclusive mobility;
- Comparative analysis highlighted disparities between population segments.

Implications for IAP

- Provides evidence-based input for inclusive mobility strategies;
- Demonstrates participatory tools' value in policy-making;
- Supports the Urban Traffic Plan update aligned with URBACT principles;
- Ensures mobility planning addresses real community needs, especially for vulnerable groups.

BRINGING MOBILITY CLOSER

Cento's New Info-point for Public Transport Subscriptions

Objective

Establish a physical info-point in Cento to support citizens in obtaining public transport passes (annual, monthly) and provide discounted tickets for specific groups (under 18, students, over 65). Addressed the lack of local access, reducing the need to travel 30+ km to Bologna or Ferrara.

Activities

- Set up infopoint at Tararì Tararera APS social hub- Service hours: Mon 17:00-19:00, Thu 9:00-11:00 (Aug 19-Dec 18, 2024);
- Telephone assistance throughout the week- Support for "Saltasu" and "Solweb" platforms, and other regional/local passes- Volunteer training, info materials (posters, flyers, digital content), promotion in schools/community centers.

Partners

- Municipality of Cento (coordination);
- Tararì Tararera APS (hosting, staffing);
- Local schools and organizations (promotion, awareness).

Timeframe

19th August 2024 – 18th December 2024

Outcome

- 527 applications processed in person;
- 128 citizens supported via phone;
- Increased access for students, parents, foreign families;
- Enhanced digital literacy support for residents unfamiliar with online services.

Implications for IAP

- Identifies need for physical service points to bridge digital divide;
- Provides model for integrating digital inclusion into public transport services;
- Insights can guide future actions targeting vulnerable populations;
- Municipality exploring long-term continuation of service beyond PUMA project.

RAISING AWARENESS ON SAFE AND SUSTAINABLE MOBILITY AMONG YOUNG CITIZENS "Pedaling into the Future"

Objective

Raise awareness and educate students (grades 4–8) on sustainable, safe, and active mobility, fostering long-term cultural change and empowering young people to become agents of change in mobility choices.

Activities

- Three-day interactive educational event (June 3–5, 2025);
- Topics: road safety, benefits of walking/cycling, active mobility and health, green and inclusive mobility;
- Direct involvement of 250 students and 15 teachers, Campaign led by Fondazione Michele Scarponi.

Partners

- Municipality of Cento (organization and coordination)
- Fondazione Michele Scarponi (expertise in road safety and sustainable mobility)
- Local schools and teachers (implementation and educational continuity).

Timeframe

3rd – 5th June 2025

Outcome

- 250 students directly engaged;
- 15 teachers actively involved;
- Raised awareness of sustainable and safe mobility–Ripple effect reaching hundreds of families;
- Encouraged schools to integrate mobility education into curricula.

Implications for IAP

- Addresses gaps in formal mobility education for young students;
- Provides a replicable model for school-based sustainable mobility campaigns;
- Supports cultural shift toward safe, active, and inclusive transport;
- Strengthens collaboration between municipality, schools, and expert organizations.

SCHOOL STREETS IN CENTO

A car-free zone and Tactical Urbanism to Reclaim Safe Space Around Schools

Objective

Create a permanently car-free zone around a school to enhance safety, comfort, and inclusivity for students, teachers, and families, while promoting tactical urbanism and child-friendly urban design.

Activities

- Full-day street closure adjacent to a school campus (August 2025);
- Installation of tactical urbanism interventions: painted surfaces, movable furniture, green spaces, pedestrian-friendly signage;
- – Engage students in playful, colorful, and interactive street design;
- Monitor behavior changes, safety perceptions, and potential modal shifts among families.

Partners

- CMV (coordination, street closure authorization, design and upkeep service of the area);
- Local schools (support, engagement);
- Students, teachers, families (participation and feedback).

Timeframe

August 2025 (until the end of the year)

Outcome

- First car-free school zone piloted in Cento;
- Enhanced safety and comfort for children and school community;
- Data collection on behavioral and perceptual changes regarding mobility;
- Community awareness of child-friendly urban design.

Implications for IAP

- Provides a replicable model for car-free school streets;
- Supports urban mobility policies prioritizing safety and inclusivity;
- Highlights potential for tactical urbanism as a tool for community and urban planning;
- Offers insights for scaling the initiative to other schools and high-risks areas.

Next Stop: Cento – Smart Mobility Actions for a Better City

The following section outlines the key actions that compose the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) of the Municipality of Cento. Each action is designed to address specific urban challenges while contributing to a broader vision of a city that is more connected, inclusive, and sustainable.

With a clear focus on mobility as a catalyst for social and economic integration, each action is presented through a dedicated implementation table that identifies its objectives, actors involved, resources needed, and expected outcomes.

Together, these actions represent the roadmap that will bring Cento closer to its next destination: a resilient and people-centered urban environment.



LA STRADA È DI TUTTI

INCONTRO SULLA MOBILITÀ ATTIVA A CENTO

MARTEDÌ 3 GIUGNO 2025, ORE 21.00
SALA F. ZARRI
Piazza Guercino, 39 Cento (FE)

SALUTI
Vito Salatiello
*Vicesindaco del
Comune di Cento*

INTERVENTI
Marco Scarponi
*Segretario generale
Fondazione Michele
Scarponi ETS*

Matteo Dondé
Architetto e urbanista



Action 1

Establishment of a Permanent Contact Point to Support Fragile Citizens in Accessing Public Transport Passes

€5,000/year

A dedicated contact point supporting vulnerable citizens in accessing public transport passes, bridging the digital divide and promoting social inclusion. Budget covers staffing, promotion, and monitoring.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Assign dedicated civil servant to the contact point (2 afternoons per week)	August 2026, recurring annually	5,000/year	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, Dept. of Relation with Citizens	Political turnover, lack of commitment	Civil servant assigned and operational
2. Set up physical contact point with necessary materials and signage	August 2026	Included in €5,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, Dept. of Relation with Citizens	Insufficient resources for materials	Contact point functional and accessible
3. Promote service to target users via local associations, schools, and public transport companies	August 2026 – Ongoing	Minimal (printed flyers, digital communication)	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento; Local associations; PT companies	Low participation due to lack of awareness	Number of users reached through promotion
4. Provide in-person and telephone assistance for public transport subscriptions	August 2026 – Ongoing	Included in €5,000	Municipal budget	Civil servant at contact point; Local PT companies	High demand exceeding capacity	Number of users served weekly/monthly; Number of passes issued.
5. Collect feedback and monitor service quality	Monthly, starting September 2026	Minimal (printing/online survey tools)	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento; Civil servant.	Low response rate from users	User satisfaction surveys; qualitative feedback
6. Review and report annually to Municipality	End of each year	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento	Lack of follow-up reporting	Annual report produced and approved

Action 2

Development of an On-Demand Public Transport System in Cento and Bordering Municipalities

€150,000/year

A flexible, responsive transport service for Cento and neighboring municipalities, improving connectivity and reducing car dependency in low-density areas. Budget includes feasibility study, service setup, operations, and promotion.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Conduct feasibility study to assess demand, routes, and technical requirements	June 2026	€20,000	Municipalities, provincial contributions	Municipality of Cento (Mobility Dept.), AMI	Insufficient data or inaccurate demand estimation	Feasibility study completed and validated
2. Design operational model for on-demand service, including digital booking platform, fleet size, and schedules	July–Sept 2026	€30,000	Municipalities, regional funding	Municipality of Cento, AMI, partner municipalities	Technical challenges, low platform usability	Operational model documented and approved
3. Coordinate agreements among partner municipalities, provinces, and stakeholders	July–Dec 2026	€10,000	Municipal/provincial contributions	Municipality of Cento, partner municipalities, provinces	Lack of cooperation or alignment	Signed partnership agreements
4. Procure vehicles and launch on-demand service	Jan 2027	€90,000/year	50% municipal/provincial, 20% ticket sales, 30% regional/national	Municipality of Cento, AMI, local transport providers	Low user uptake; operational delays	Service operational; number of trips/routes active
5. Promote service to target users (residents, students, elderly, migrants)	Jan 2027 – ongoing	€5,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, local associations	Low awareness among users	Number of users reached; inquiries received
6. Monitor service performance and user satisfaction	Monthly, starting Feb 2027	€5,000/year	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, AMI	Low feedback response	Quantitative: users/month, routes/trips, revenue; Qualitative: satisfaction, equity of access
7. Review and adjust operations annually	Dec 2027 onward	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, AMI	Insufficient operational flexibility	Annual report and operational adjustments implemented

Action 3

Renovation of Municipality Bike Lanes for Cyclo-tourists

€50,000 total

Upgraded and clearly marked bike lanes designed to attract cyclo-tourists, improve safety, and foster local economic and cultural benefits. Budget covers planning, renovation works, and promotional activities.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Conduct survey and assessment of existing bike lanes and identify priority renovation areas	April–May 2026	€5,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, Dept. of Public Works, Dept. of Tourism & Culture	Incomplete or outdated data	Assessment report completed; priority areas identified
2. Design renovation plan including safety improvements, signage, and integration with tourist/cultural sites	May 2026	€10,000	Municipal + regional funding	Municipality of Cento, Dept. of Public Works, Regional tourism agencies	Technical/design issues	Renovation plan approved
3. Implement renovation works on bike lanes (resurfacing, signage, markings)	June 2026	€25,000	Municipal + regional/national/EU	Municipality of Cento, Dept. of Public Works, contractors	Construction delays, weather disruptions	Bike lanes renovated and clearly marked
4. Promote renovated bike routes to cyclo-tourists via websites, brochures, influencers, and local partners	June–Aug 2026	€5,000	Regional tourism promotion agencies	Municipality of Cento, local hospitality, cultural associations	Limited engagement from private stakeholders	Number of tourists reached; downloads of maps/routes; business participation
5. Monitor usage and collect visitor feedback	June–Dec 2026	€5,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento, local info points, partner accommodations	Low response rates	Quantitative: number of cyclo-tourists, bike tourists using promotions; Qualitative: visitor feedback from surveys/interviews
6. Review and report annually to Municipality	End of each year	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento	Lack of follow-up reporting	Annual report produced and approved

Action 4

Bike to Work Program for Municipal Employees

€8,000/year

Encourages municipal employees to commute by bike, reducing car use, lowering pollution, and creating a replicable model for other institutions. Budget includes commuting incentives, promotion, and app development.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Launch Bike to Work program and promote internally to municipal employees	Jan 2026	€3,000 (promotion, app creation)	Regional Funds	Municipality of Cento – HR Dept., Trade Unions	Low participation due to lack of motivation	Number of employees reached by promotion
2. Enroll employees and track kilometers commuted by bike	Jan–Dec 2026	€5,000 (incentives: €0.08/km, capped monthly)	Regional Funds	Municipality of Cento – HR Dept., employees	Difficulty tracking actual bike commuting	Number of employees enrolled; total kilometers commuted
3. Partner with local bike shops and local shops for incentives	Jan–Dec 2026	Included in €8,000	Regional Funds	Municipality of Cento – HR Dept., local shops, bike shops	Limited engagement from partners	Number of partners engaged; usage of incentives
4. Monitor environmental impact and report program outcomes	Monthly/End of year	Minimal	Regional Funds	Municipality of Cento – HR Dept.	Administrative inertia; budget cuts	Estimated CO ₂ reduction; annual report on program performance
5. Evaluate and plan for continuation/expansion of program	Dec 2026	Minimal	Regional Funds	Municipality of Cento – HR Dept., Trade Unions	Low interest in renewal	Decision on program renewal; lessons learned documented

Action 5

Creation of Secured Bike Parking at Cento Bus Station for Intermodal Mobility

€ 20,000 total

Safe bike parking facilities at the bus station to support intermodal commuting, encouraging combined bike-and-bus travel and reducing reliance on private cars. Budget covers design, installation, security measures, and promotion.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Design and plan secured bike parking layout at Cento bus station	Jan–Feb 2027	€5,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Dept. of Public Works; AMI	Poor design leading to inefficient space use	Design approved; layout meets security and accessibility requirements
2. Procure materials, bike racks, and security systems	Feb–Mar 2027	€10,000	€15,000 Municipality + €5,000 AMI	Municipality of Cento – Dept. of Public Works	Budget overruns; supply delays	Procurement completed on time
3. Install bike parking facilities and security measures	Mar–Apr 2027	Included in €20,000	Municipality + AMI	Municipality of Cento; contractors	Installation delays; vandalism during setup	Parking fully installed and operational
4. Promote intermodal bike-bus commuting to local citizens and commuters	Apr–May 2027	Minimal (flyers, digital promotion)	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento; AMI	Low awareness or demand	Number of promotional materials distributed; initial usage data
5. Monitor usage, safety, and commuter satisfaction	Monthly from May 2027	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento; AMI	Low adoption; security incidents	Number of bikes parked daily/weekly; satisfaction rates; increase in bike usage
6. Review and plan potential expansions	Dec 2027	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento; AMI	Insufficient impact to justify expansion	Report on usage and recommendations for further expansion

Action 6

Creation of Low-Traffic and Pedestrian Priority Zones in the Historic Center of Cento

€10,000

Creation of pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly zones in the historic center, reducing car traffic and pollution while enhancing safety and revitalizing commercial and social life. Budget covers planning, implementation, and promotion of the low-traffic areas.

Implementation Steps	Timeline	Costs (€)	Funding Sources	Responsible Actors	Risks	Monitoring Indicators
1. Conduct planning and identify zones for low-traffic and pedestrian priority	Jan–Feb 2028	€2,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Dept. Public Works, Urban Mobility, Local Police	Coordination issues; political changes	Zones identified and approved
2. Develop traffic restriction plan, signage, and communication materials	Feb–Mar 2028	€3,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Urban Mobility & Public Works	Opposition from businesses or residents; poor communication	Traffic plan approved; signage designed
3. Implement low-traffic zones and install signage	Apr–May 2028	€4,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Public Works; Local Police	Resistance from residents; enforcement difficulties	Zones operational; signage in place
4. Promote pedestrian zones and inform public about benefits	Apr–Jun 2028	€1,000	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Communication Dept., Local Police	Communication gaps; low citizen engagement	Number of info campaigns; public awareness measured
5. Monitor traffic, pedestrian/cyclist counts, air quality, and business impact	Monthly from May 2028	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Urban Mobility & Local Police	Low monitoring compliance	Traffic reduction; pedestrian/cyclist increase; air quality; business/customer feedback; citizen satisfaction surveys
6. Review results and adjust or expand zones as needed	Dec 2028	Minimal	Municipal budget	Municipality of Cento – Public Works & Urban Mobility	Political or administrative changes	Annual report; recommendations for further development

Section 4

Implementation framework

4.1.

Governance

The governance of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) will be led by the Municipality of Cento, which, by adopting a cross-sector approach and mobilizing the diverse expertise of its departments, will oversee the implementation of the plan. Within this framework, the Public Works Department will play a central role, being responsible for coordinating the actions and activities required to achieve the programmatic objectives of the IAP. The department will be supported by external experts when needed, ensuring technical soundness and operational effectiveness.

In addition to its central role in the IAP, the Public Works Department is also responsible for implementing the first Sustainable Urban Mobility Plan (SUMP) in the history of Cento. This dual responsibility will enable the integration and interaction of the two plans to generate synergistic outcomes in the field of mobility across the municipal territory.

The Public Works Department will be further supported by the European Projects Office and other municipal departments, which will contribute their specific expertise in project design, fundraising, stakeholder relations, and citizen engagement.

This collaborative structure is also intended to ensure continuity with the Urbact Local Group (ULG), composed of citizens, enterprises, and key local stakeholders, which represents one of the Municipality's most valuable resources for achieving the impact set out in the IAP.

Governance processes will also be reinforced through:

- The establishment of a dedicated IAP Coordination Team within the municipality, composed of the Mayor of Cento, one representative of the ULG, two municipal directors (from the Public Works Department and the Social Services Department), the Head of the European Projects Office, and the Head of the Municipal Communication Office. This team will be responsible for fostering cross-departmental collaboration and ensuring that the implementation of the IAP is following the established timeframe, reaching the forecasted impact;
- Structured reporting tools, including annual progress dashboards and semi-annual updates submitted to both the Municipal Council and the ULG;
- A systematic integration with the updated SUMP, aimed at avoiding overlaps and promoting coherence across policy areas;
- Transparent communication mechanisms, allowing citizens to follow developments and actively contribute to implementation through digital platforms and participatory initiatives.

4.2.

Stakeholders' engagement

The engagement of stakeholders will be pursued through a combination of agile and inclusive tools designed to ensure both efficiency in communication and continuity in participation. Digital channels such as WhatsApp groups, mailing lists, and social media will be used to promote the activities of the ULG, attract new members, and guarantee fast and effective information flows among participants.

Additionally, stakeholder engagement will be structured as follows:

- **Regular focus groups** with specific citizen groups and ULG members, maintaining continuity with the PUMA project experience and enabling targeted feedback on key thematic areas. A particular focus will be placed on meetings with women and groups of migrant women, in order to gather direct insights to support the development of a mobility system that better addresses gender-specific needs;
- **Systematic surveys** to gather input and measure public perception on IAP and SUMP initiatives;
- **Workshops and co-design sessions** to involve stakeholders in shaping actions and solutions;
- **Public consultations** to collect broader community feedback, including complaints and concerns about the actions carried out by the IAP, ensuring transparent and inclusive decision-making.

This structured approach will ensure continuous dialogue, foster shared ownership of initiatives, and strengthen the municipality's capacity to align actions with local needs and priorities.

4.3.

Funding strategy

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan will rely on a diversified funding strategy, designed to ensure both short-term feasibility and long-term sustainability.

The Municipality of Cento will allocate its own resources to support the implementation of selected IAP actions. Budget allocations will be made within the expenditure chapters of the Public Works and Urban Planning departments, primarily to co-finance the more “structural” actions of the plan related to mobility. In addition, four municipal employees will dedicate part of their working hours to the implementation of the IAP and to the activities of the ULG, thereby strengthening the administrative capacity of the municipality to deliver on the plan.

Complementary resources will be mobilised through a systematic exploration of European, national, and regional funding opportunities. In particular, for structural interventions related to mobility, the Municipality of Cento will seek resources under the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Interreg programmes, Cohesion Policy instruments, as well as through national funding schemes promoted by the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry of Environment. For actions of a more research-oriented nature—especially those aimed at piloting new approaches or operationalising the outcomes of future ULG activities—applications will be prepared for European programmes such as URBACT, the European Urban Initiative (EUI), and LIFE.

The European Projects Office of the Municipality will play a central role in identifying opportunities, preparing applications, and ensuring synergies between the IAP and other ongoing projects.

Starting from 2027, the Municipality also plans to establish a small dedicated Fundraising Office. This structure will be tasked with interacting in an agile and efficient manner with public and private stakeholders in the territory, in order to activate fundraising initiatives capable of partially or fully financing IAP actions, as well as supporting innovative mobility initiatives proposed by citizens and ULG members.

This multi-layered approach is intended to guarantee the effective mobilisation of resources, avoid duplication, and strengthen the municipality’s capacity to sustain the actions foreseen in the IAP and the SUMP over the long term.

4.4. Risks Analysis and mitigation strategies

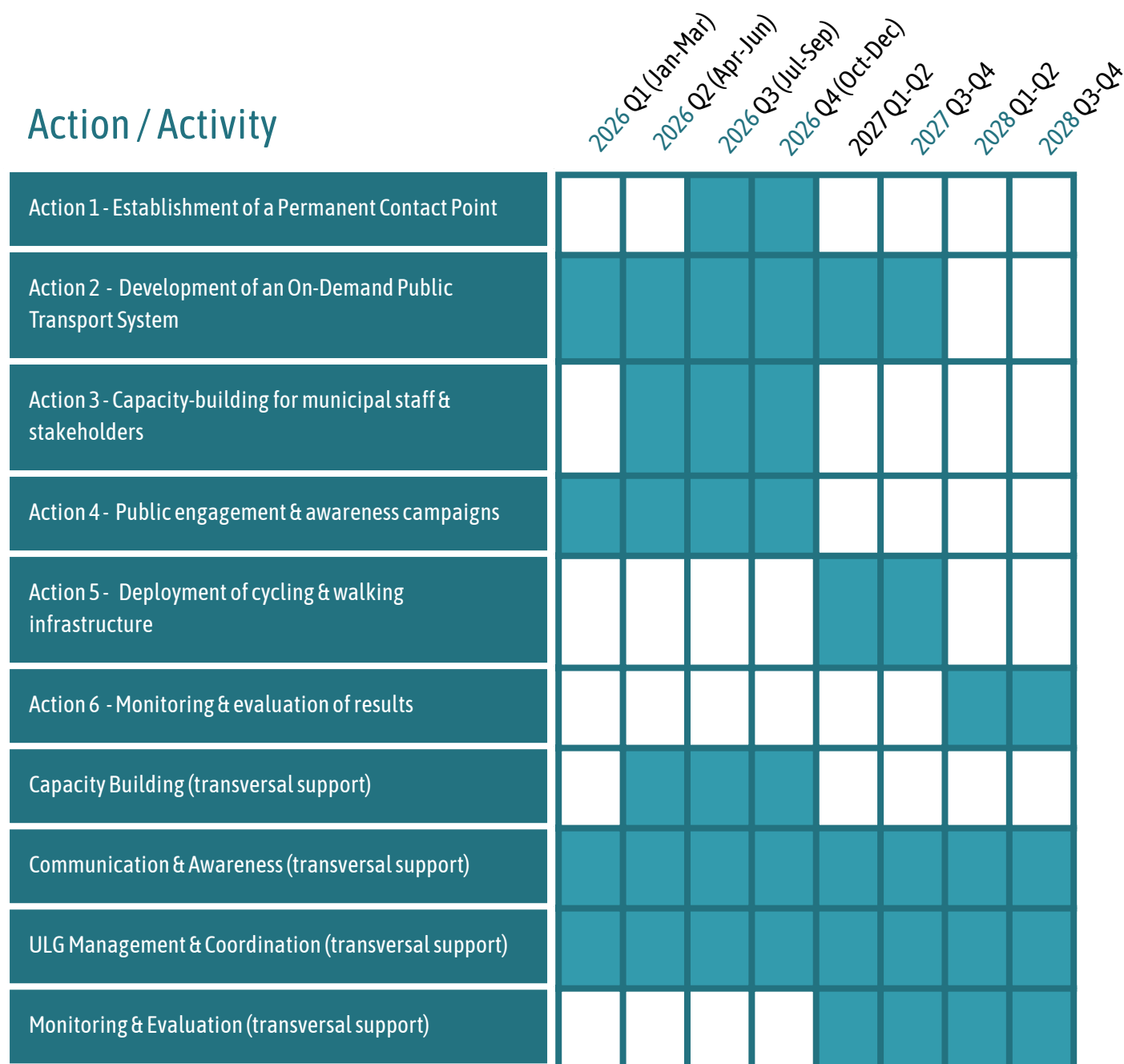
The Integrated Action Plan (IAP) developed by the Municipality of Cento within the URBACT PUMA project represents a pioneering effort to structure sustainable urban mobility for the city. While the plan promises multiple benefits, its implementation is exposed to several risks stemming from institutional, political, social, and financial factors. Identifying these risks and their potential impact is crucial to ensure successful delivery and long-term integration. The table below summarizes the key risks, their probability and impact, and the strategies designed to mitigate them.

Risk	Probability	Impact	Mitigation strategy
Cultural and institutional gap in sustainable mobility; lack of prior SUMP experience	Medium	High	Capacity-building activities for municipal staff and stakeholders; peer-learning sessions; promoting a shared culture of sustainability and innovation
Internal organizational limitations; cross-departmental coordination challenges	Medium	High	Targeted training, internal workshops, clear task allocation; regular inter-departmental meetings
Political turnover and strategic discontinuity (upcoming elections)	High	High	Strengthening political ownership; integrating IAP objectives into broader municipal strategies; securing cross-party consensus
Citizen and stakeholder resistance to changes in urban habits	High	Medium	Targeted information campaigns; transparent communication; feedback loops; participation processes tailored to local needs
Fragile participatory culture; risk of disappointment if expectations are unmet	Medium	Medium	Continuous communication; inclusion of underrepresented groups; feedback mechanisms; gradual implementation of participatory actions
Changes in national/regional funding or budget reallocations	Low	Medium	Early identification of funding sources; diversified financing strategy; close monitoring of budget availability
Territorial fragmentation; coordination challenges with neighboring provinces/municipalities	Medium	Medium	Strengthen inter-municipal dialogue; formal agreements; collaborative planning for cross-boundary actions
Bureaucratic inertia; complex administrative procedures slowing down pilot or tactical actions	High	High	Simplify procedures where possible; assign dedicated staff; use pilot projects to test rapid implementation approaches

4.5. Overall Timeline

The implementation of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) is planned over a three-year period (01/2026 – 12/2028), ensuring a phased and coordinated execution of all actions. The timeline takes into account dependencies between activities, seasonal and operational constraints, as well as critical milestones for monitoring progress. Early actions focus on establishing governance structures, capacity-building, and preparatory works, while subsequent phases address the deployment of on-the-ground interventions, public engagement activities, and evaluation processes. The timeline is designed to maintain flexibility to adapt to unforeseen challenges, such as changes in funding, stakeholder availability, or political conditions, while ensuring that key objectives are achieved within the project’s timeframe.

A visual representation, such as a Gantt chart or a summary table, can help illustrate the sequencing of activities, their duration, and interdependencies, allowing stakeholders to quickly understand the rhythm and priorities of the project implementation.



4.6.

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring and reporting are essential to ensure the successful implementation and long-term impact of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) in Cento. A structured and transparent monitoring framework will allow the Municipality to track progress, ensure alignment with strategic objectives, and deliver measurable results. It will also facilitate timely adjustments, enhance accountability, and provide a solid basis for future decision-making and potential funding opportunities.

The Municipality of Cento, in coordination with the URBACT Local Group (ULG), will implement a two-level monitoring approach:

- Action-Level Monitoring

Each action of the IAP will be tracked through specific indicators defined in the action tables (e.g., number of citizens reached, kilometers of cycling infrastructure implemented, usage of on-demand transport services, stakeholder participation). Action owners—primarily municipal departments—will report on progress, budget execution, and milestones achieved. These updates will be compiled semi-annually and shared with the coordination team.

- Plan-Level Monitoring and Reporting

A central coordination mechanism, anchored by the Municipality and supported by the ULG, will assess how all actions collectively contribute to the strategic objectives of the IAP. Cross-cutting indicators such as stakeholder engagement, inclusivity, and sustainable mobility outcomes will be reviewed annually. Findings will feed into internal reports and periodic summaries shared with the URBACT community and relevant stakeholders.

Supporting Tools and Processes

To facilitate monitoring, the IAP team will develop:

- A monitoring toolkit including indicator templates, data collection guidelines, and reporting formats.
- A digital dashboard for internal use to visualize progress, identify bottlenecks, and track deadlines in real time.
- Regular ULG meetings, where monitoring results will be reviewed and validated with stakeholder input.
- Integration of IAP monitoring with existing urban strategies to ensure consistency and avoid duplication.

Additionally, qualitative feedback from citizens and local partners will be gathered through participatory evaluations, public consultations, and social media engagement, particularly for actions aimed at behavioral change and awareness.

Reporting Cycle

The reporting framework will ensure that the IAP remains a living document, evolving based on evidence, dialogue, and shared responsibility. A dashboard-style monitoring template will serve as a practical tool for tracking progress across all actions, including:

- Action title and code
- Associated strategic objective
- Timeline (planned vs. actual)
- Key performance indicators (quantitative and qualitative)
- Notes on risks and mitigation
- Comments from ULG or technical staff

The dashboard will be updated quarterly and discussed during ULG meetings. It will also serve as a reporting tool for communication with the URBACT Secretariat and the broader community, enhancing transparency, accountability, and continuous learning.

4.7.

Communication Strategy

The communication strategy of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) in Cento has the primary goal of making the project's actions, impacts, and objectives widely known and easily understood by both citizens and stakeholders. Effective communication is essential not only to inform, but also to foster awareness and participation, ensuring that the changes introduced in the field of urban mobility are broadly accepted and integrated into daily life.

A particular focus will be placed on promoting behavioral shifts towards more sustainable modes of transport—such as walking, cycling, and shared or public mobility—by highlighting the concrete advantages that these solutions can bring.

Key messages will therefore emphasize:

- the environmental, health, and quality-of-life benefits of sustainable mobility;
- the specific contribution of each action to Cento's long-term vision for mobility.
-

To deliver these messages, the Municipality will rely on a diverse mix of communication channels. Online tools such as the municipal website and social media platforms will play a central role, complemented by newsletters, local press, and informational materials distributed at mobility hubs. In order to reach different audiences effectively, visual and engaging formats (videos, infographics, short testimonials) will be prioritized.

Printed materials will be used only when targeting groups less accustomed to digital tools—such as elderly residents—so as to reduce the environmental impact of communication activities.

In addition to one-way information, the strategy strongly encourages public engagement. Interactive campaigns and events, organized during popular occasions like the Carnival or "Settembre Centese," will provide opportunities for residents to learn about the IAP and contribute actively. Targeted surveys and consultations will be launched to gather feedback, while schools, universities, local businesses, and citizen groups will be directly involved in co-creating and supporting a shared culture of sustainable mobility.

Overall, this communication strategy seeks to go beyond simple dissemination: it aims to inspire, to build trust, and to encourage the community of Cento to embrace the principles of the IAP, turning them into everyday practices and long-term habits.



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URBACT



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