COPE

COHERENT
PLACE-BASED
CLIMATE ACTION

URBACT

Co-funded by
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Interreg

INTEGRATED ACTION PLAN

OCTOBER 2025

URBACT

Co-funded by
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BISTRIŢA MOVES GREEN

Section 1: Context, needs and vision

Overall theme

A just green transition of cities is key in achieving carbon neutrality in Europe by 2050. The topic of the COPE (Coherent Place-based Climate Action) network is to unlock the green potentials of citizen action through a place-based approach, recognizing citizens and local action groups as fundamental stakeholders working to accelerate the green transition. In Bistrița we set an Urbact Local Group, with different stakeholders, in order to ensure diversity and gender equality.

The COPE network is about changing mindsets. To succeed with the green transition, change is needed. In other words, the policy challenges of the green transition that we, as a global society, have tried to deliver on for many years, cannot be fulfilled without zooming in on the citizens and their local communities and the local policy challenges and without engaging the local civil society to take responsibility for the change. Our local challenge is exactly about changing mindsets to change behaviour, in the field of mobility, to make the switch to a greener local one.

Different places have unique characteristics, needs, and challenges, and therefore, governance should be tailored to address these specificities.

The ABCD approach is an overall attempt to empower the citizens and to strengthen a community by creating relations and trust to make it sustainable and to create a base for action.

By applying the ABCD approach we force the local authorities to step out of the box and be curious and open to new ideas based on the local resources, hopes and ambitions and to empower the citizens in taking action, leaving very little room for thinking of the citizens as users of the municipality services. As we implemented the three major mobility infrastructure projects, citizens were forced to leave the personal comfort behind and start acting for a greener future. We addressed with our COPE project those living in the areas directly affected by these changes. Plus, we added the schools, as the way the pupils travel to school and back has a major impact upon the entire city mobility.

Typically, development of urban policies within the green transition is a top-down process on the structural level with plans and targets designed centrally by the central political level and realised by their administrations. This bypasses the important strategic scope close to the citizens and other local stakeholders to reach the positive social tipping point for example through a bottom-up co-creative approach to initiatives or activities to be embedded locally.

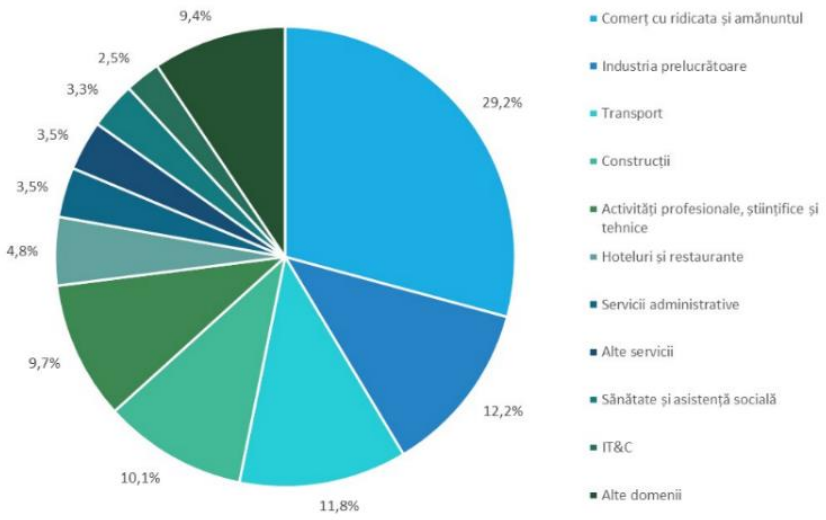
This top-down process furthermore introduces a strong social bias in the type of local citizens that are involved, where the less resourceful citizens are seldomly engaged to play an active role in city governance. Thus, local needs are not directly addressed by the central policy and are often overlooked since they have not been considered during the policy design phase. This poses a serious social bias problem to the type of transformation and solutions that are developed in cities, particularly regarding the ability to develop a just green transition. This is why, when setting up the local group we also wanted to have the political back-up, and involvement of teachers, NGOs, local police and other administrative staff.

Involving citizens and local action groups will in many cities ask for a change in working procedures. This change entails a development of governance procedures into a more open approach implementing place-based policies. In doing so the administration will bring decision-making closer to citizens and local stakeholders and thereby increase the focus on equality and diversity.

Current situation

For a better understanding of the local challenge, and the reasons we chose it, it is important to have some local figures, to comprehend the level of involvement. So, the total number of citizens in Bistriţa is 78.877, with an average age 40.5yrs, where 49.59% are men and 50.41% women. Natural growth has a downward trend since 2018.

Economically, Bistrița is above the national average, but below the average of other major cities in the region. The economic development has recorded a 22% increase in the local companies' turnover. Also, during the past 6 years the number of local active companies grew by 18.6%. Over half of the active companies from Bistriţa-Năsăud county are located in Bistrița. The average number of employees in 2019 in the city was of over 40,000 people, thus leading to a low share of unemployed in total labour resources as the city attracts workers form other neighbouring municipalities. The main companies from Bistriţa-Năsăud are in the fields of: electric cables, wiring systems, aluminium radiators and batteries for vehicles, metallic structures, polyethylene tubes and pipes, PVC tubes, PVC profiles for windows, wood exploiting and wood processing, textile industry, foodstuff: bakery, milk processing, ice-cream processing, meat processing, construction and installation works etc. Having in mind the profile of the automotive industry, we have yet one more reason for the resistance towards mobility shifts. The foreign capital companies located in the county are represented by German companies (25.77%), followed by Italian companies (25.25%).



The social challenges are the deployment of populations, as part of a national wave, to other European countries, and part of this current are also the children left at home with relatives. The rapid increase in the rate of population aging leads, in the absence of countermeasures, to the evolution of the aging index demographic and to the generation of a demographic major imbalance in the following periods, with negative implications on social plan. Increasing pressure on people of working age as a result of the increase in the demographic dependency ratio.

Geographically, Bistriţa, capital of Bistriţa-Năsăud County, is located in the North-East of Transylvania plateau, is placed on a plain ground, at an altitude of 356 m. The city is crossed by the river bearing the same name. It is surrounded by hills covered with orchards and forests, and has a total surface of 145,47 km². The main access road is the European road E58 (DN17) connecting Transylvania and Moldova, this is why we are called "the gate of Transylvania". From the connectivity point of view, Bistriţa is 2 hours 'drive from Cluj, the regional capital where there is an international airport, 4-5 hours' drive from the borders and 9 hours 'drive from the capital city Bucharest. The city's Functional Urban Area (FUA) is composed of the city Bistrița and includes 6 surrounding localities: Unirea, Viişoara, Ghinda, Sărata, Sigmir, Slătiniţa.

Although the city has recorded an accelerated development during the last decade and the quality of life from an economical point of view has increased for its residents, there are other aspects of its urban development which have not coped at the same speed. As an example, the increased attractiveness of the city conducted to a higher demand for housing which in term led to a rapid sprawl of residential areas close to the core part of the city and the industrial area. This type of urban development led to other problems such as areas with high population density, traffic congestion, increased demand for proximity facilities (schools, pharmacies etc.) and others. As a result, one of the most serious issues in recent years has been the increase of air pollution as CO2 emissions grew by almost 5% since 2008, to a record level of over 350,000 tonnes in 2021. The community's expenditure of electricity, natural gas and gasoline (as a whole) for daily activities has overgrown the savings achieved by changing appliances or cars with less energy consumption (as national programmes have been continuously developed and implemented in these matters). Between 2013 and 2018, emissions of PM2.5 and PM10 suspended particles in the transport sector increased. On the territory of the municipality of Bistrița, there are 4 installations that fall under the scope of Directive 2008/1/EC IPPC regarding the integrated control of pollution. Most of the green spaces are concentrated in the central and peri-central area of the municipality, the public green spaces being few and small in the new residential districts and in the component localities of the municipality. Most sectors saw an increase in CO2 emissions between 2008 and 2018, with the largest increases occurring in the municipal buildings and residential buildings sectors.

Relevant existing strategies and policies

Category	Details
GHG Emission Reduction Commitment	Bistrița committed to reducing GHG emissions by **40% between 2008 and 2030** under the **Covenant of Mayors for Climate & Energy**.
Emission Trends	CO_2 emissions increased since 2008, reaching **over 350,000 tons in 2021**.
Emission Monitoring	**CO_2 emissions have been monitored every two years since 2008 by the local administration.**
Mitigation & Adaptation Frameworks	Measures aligned with the **Paris Agreement**, **EU Green Deal**, and **EU Strategic Vision for Climate Neutrality by 2050**.
Methodology for CO_2 Targets	Targets calculated using the **Tyndall methodology** based on the **carbon budget**.
Green City Accord	Bistrița became a signatory in **2021**, committing to environmental action in 5 key areas: AirWaterNature & BiodiversityCircular Economy & WasteNoise
Long-Term Renovation Plan	Completed in **2021** for the period **2021–2050**, targeting energy-efficient and decarbonized public building stock.
Building Renovation Success	30% of collective housing stock older than 1990 was refurbished Best renovation rate in Romania
Motivation for Renovation	Driven by **citizen demand for comfort**, not necessarily climate concerns.
Heating & Cooling Strategy	Strategy developed in 2020 for medium and long-term planning. 95% of heating relies on natural gas Most homes use individual boilersGrowing attention to cooling needs due to rising summer temperatures
CIVITAS Membership	Joined **CIVITAS** in **2021**, supporting sustainable urban mobility and transport aligned with the **European Green Deal**.

Problems identified by local stakeholders

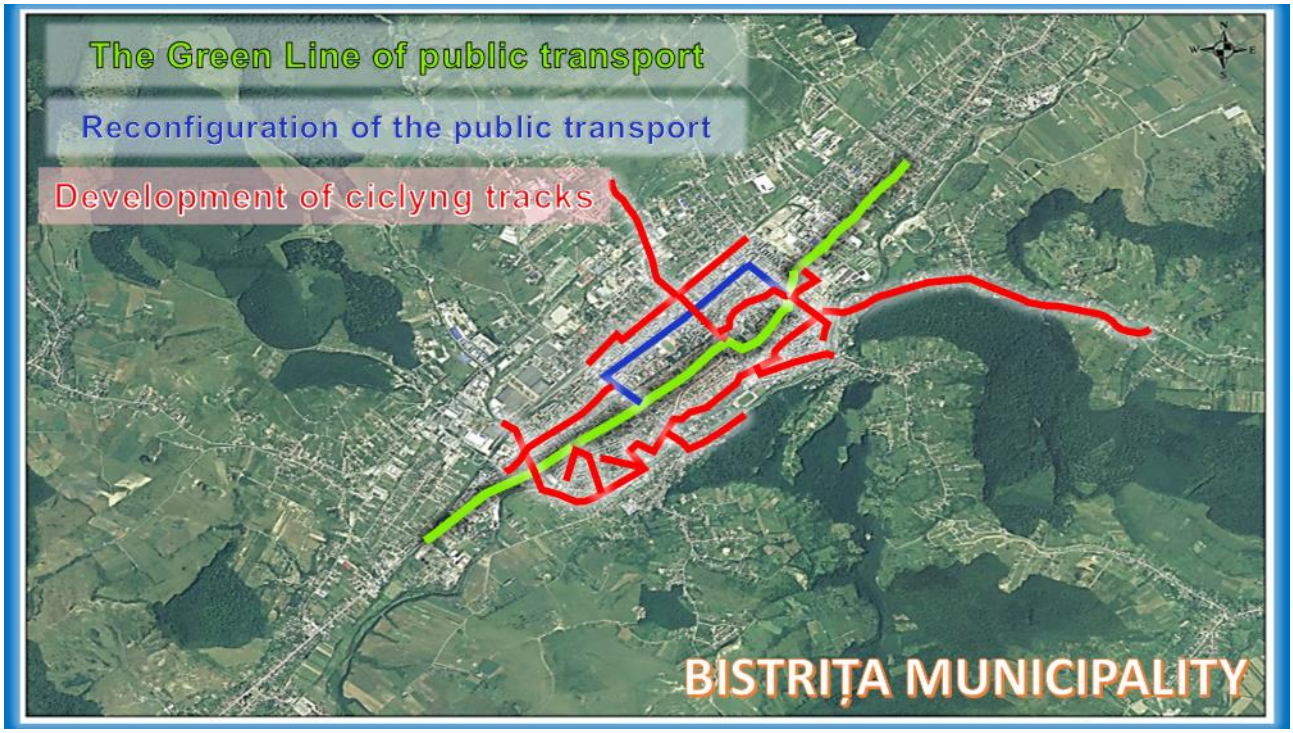
The place-based approach for Bistrița is concentrated around the mobility problems of the city, that the municipality is trying to solve through three major infrastructure projects. The relation with the COPE project is related to the citizen's involvement in taking co-responsibility for the inherent changes created in their everyday life.

Municipality framing

When we started this journey, we had a lot of questions. As we traditionally link our soft projects, like this one, with the big investment ones, we weren't sure which way to turn to. As climate challenge is so vast, and we have locally all types of projects, we decided that the city needed to connect the COPE project with the major investment mobility projects. All three are interrelated and represent a major mobility shift for Bistrița.

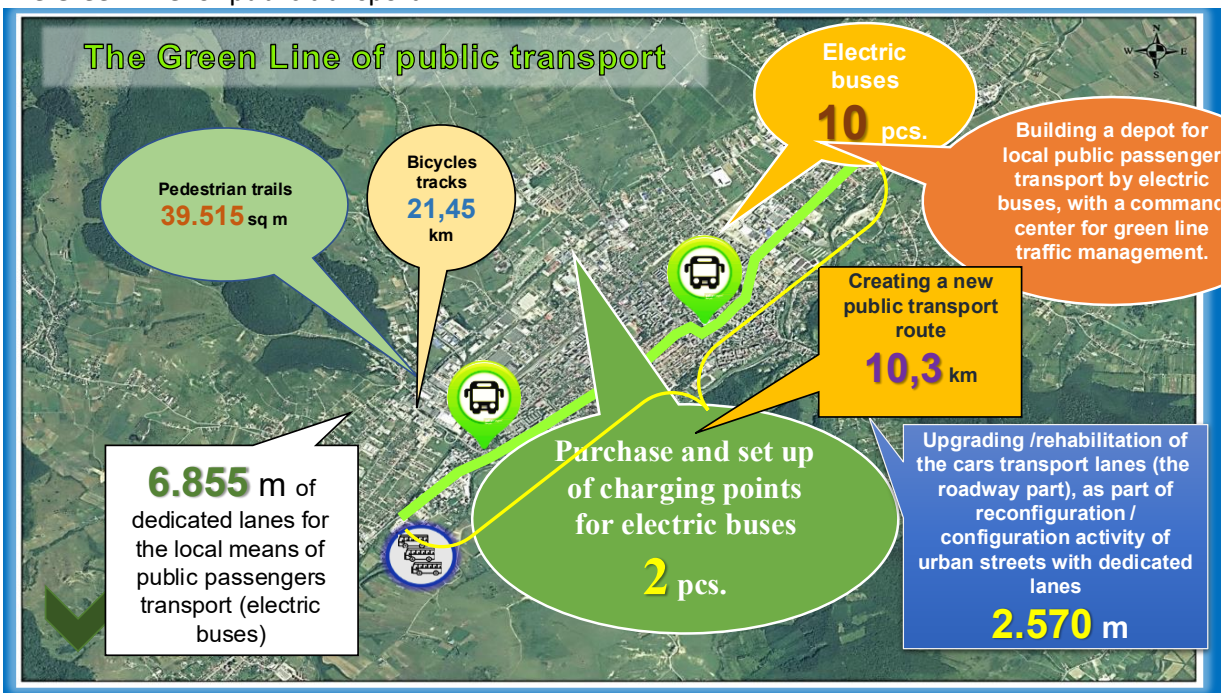
As at the time we were implementing three mobility projects: building of the bike lanes, dedicated bus lane for the green line and reconfiguration of transport axis, all dedicated to the fluidization of traffic in the municipality. By implementing these three projects we aim to an annual decrease in greenhouse gases (tones CO2

equivalent/year) by 13.1%; an annual increase in number of passengers using public passenger transport systems by 33%; an annual increase in number of people using modernized/built routes pedestrian areas by 14.45%; an annual increase in number of people using built/upgraded bike lanes/trails by 175%.



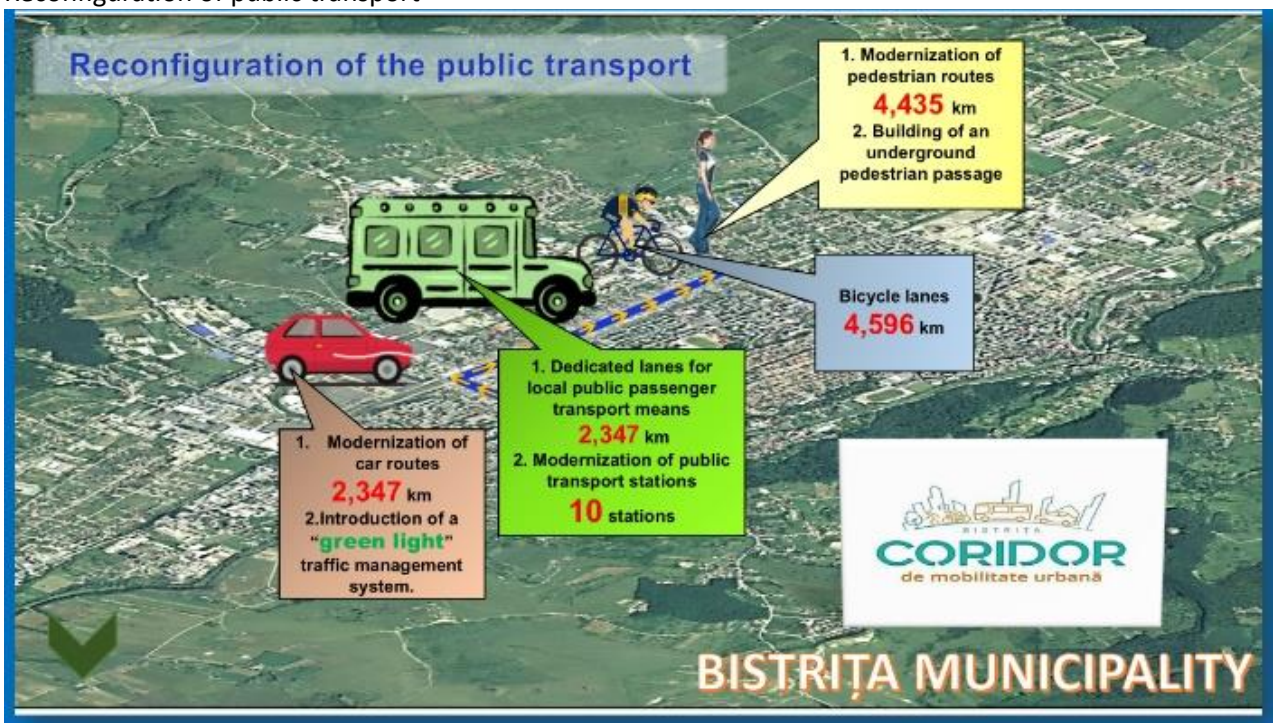
Bistrița is also facing several challenges in the field of mobility and transport, namely reducing intensive use of private automobiles and heavy freight transport inside the city, which amassed over 100.000 tonnes of CO2 emissions in 2021 (according to the municipality's data). To tackle the first mobility challenge, the municipality has implemented several projects to improve its local transport fleet and bike infrastructure. However, these interventions are recent or even under development, and therefore mobility patterns and behaviours haven't evolved yet towards a more sustainable direction.

The Green Line for public transport

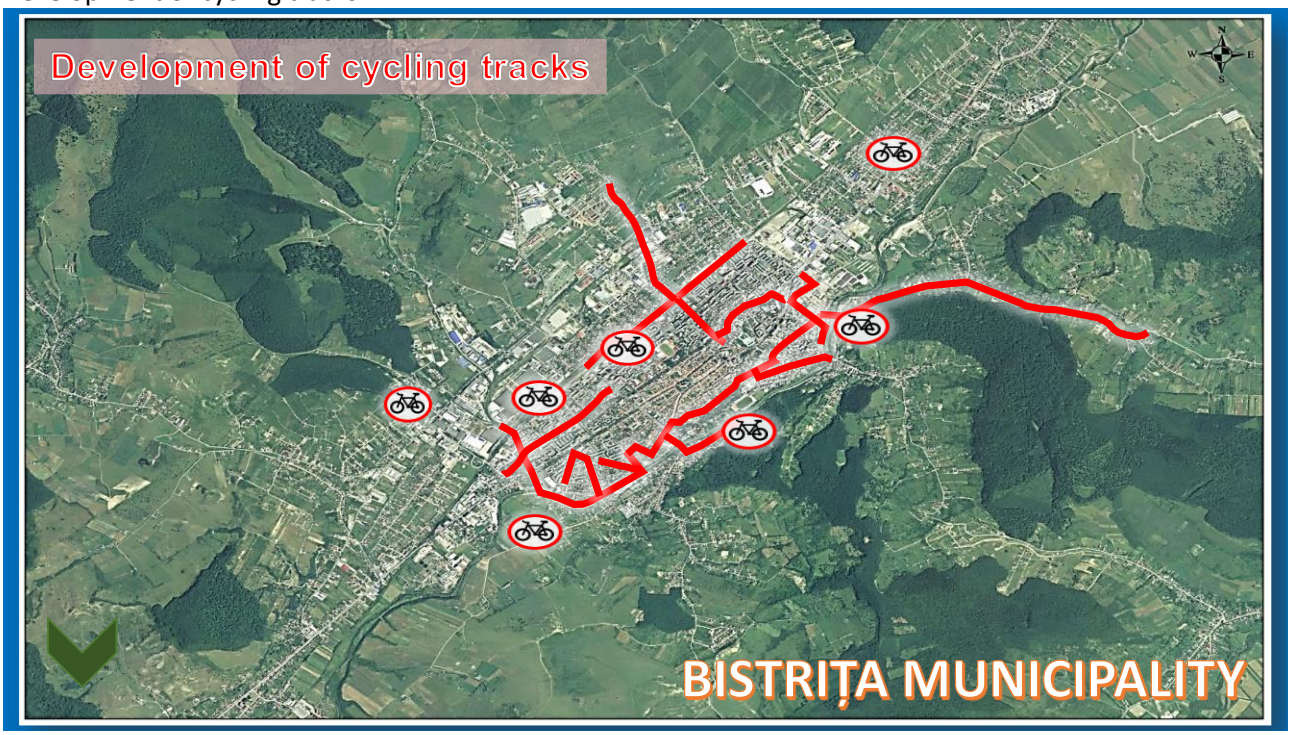


As for the second challenge, Bistrița does not yet have a ring road for the freight transport to bypass the city. Currently, freight transit is done on a secondary route, parallel to the main NE-SW axis of the city, which crosses the main industrial area and several residential areas. Overall, the current road infrastructure cannot accommodate the transport needs of the city at peak hours, which leads to daily traffic congestion of the city centre and secondary transit route and air pollution due to the high level of CO2 and other particles emitted.

Reconfiguration of public transport



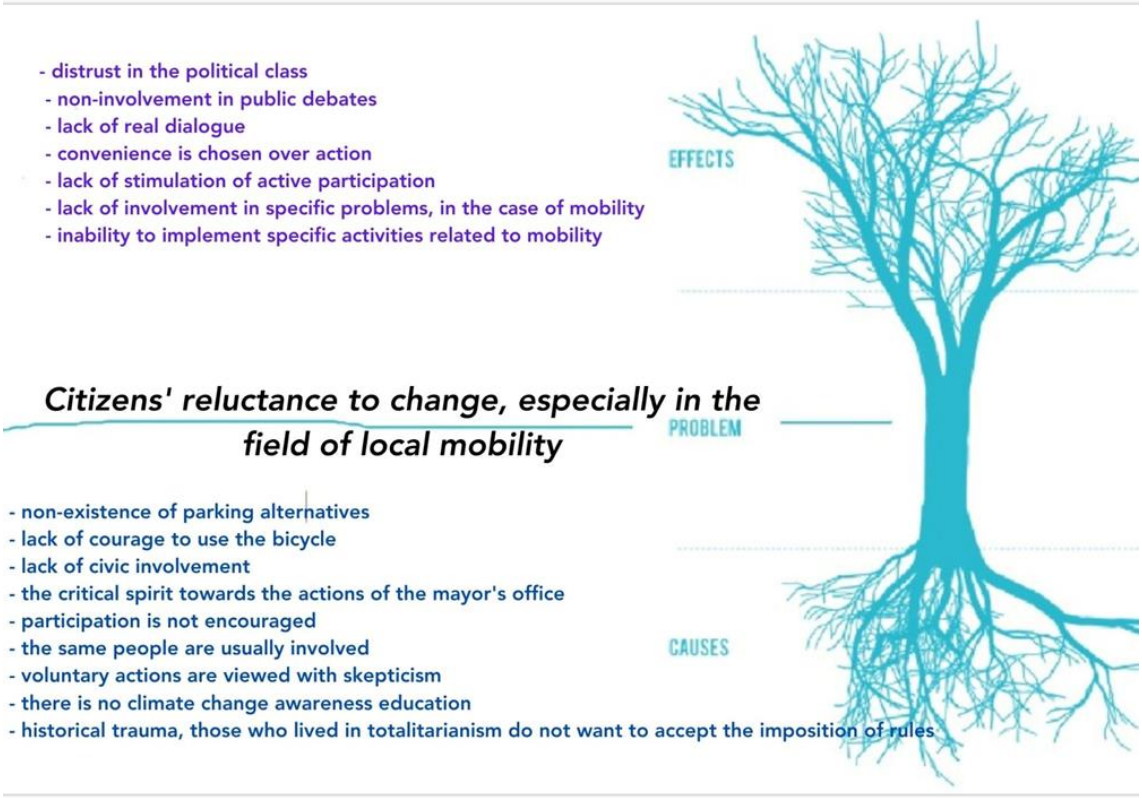
Development of cycling tracks



ULG problem identification under the municipality framing

The Urbact Local Group met in plenum several times, but most of the debates were unfolded online. The most important meetings were the ones around proposing different small-scale actions and ultimately deciding which one to be implemented. Also, intense shared work was taken in the development of the Integrated Action Plan, being written in a collaborative method and based on discussions around each part.
The Analysis undertaken by the group was unfolded at the beginning of the project. The root causes are deeply social, psychological, and systemic — not just logistical. Also, the historical and cultural contexts (like past totalitarianism) were approached and considered when we described the participatory mobility policies. The issues like: trust-building, education, and visible results are considered crucial by the Group to shift public attitude. The most debated problem was the citizens' comfort zones, their habitual behavior, and their skepticism which act as barriers even when the infrastructure improves.

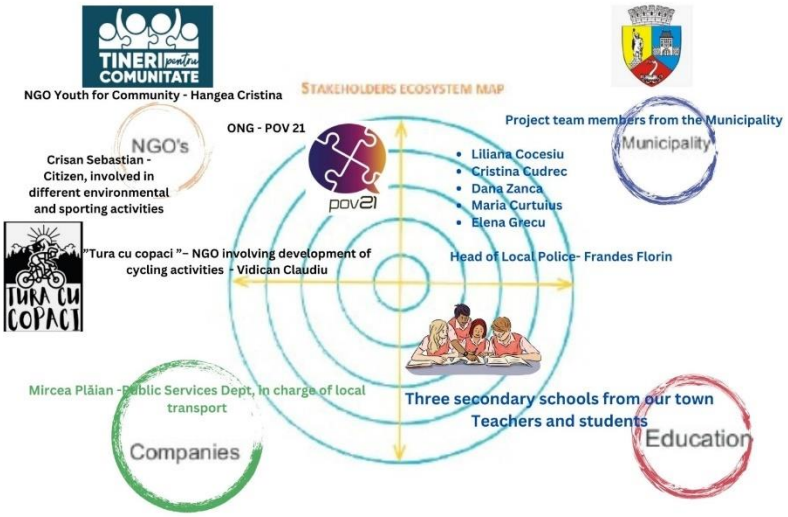
Our problem tree



OUR URBACT LOCAL GROUP

The URBACT Local Group (ULG) brought together citizens, technicians, associations, public and academic institutions. Diversity and commitment of this group were fundamental in identifying the real challenges of the territory and proposing concrete and innovative solutions.
The URBACT Local Group (ULG), formed during the COPE project, will be maintained and will play a role in the implementation of the plan, promoting the active and continuous participation of citizens in the city's life.

Name	Position	Organisation
Anca Lazar	Manager	Transmixt – local public transport society
Claudiu Vidican	Administrator	Tura cu copaci – NGO involving development of cycling activities
Sebastian Crisan	Citizen, statistician	Citizen, involved in different environmental and sporting activities
Gavrila Urs	Administrator	POV 21 - NGO
Florin Frandes		Head of local police
Liliana Cocesiu	Project team member	Bistrita Municipality
Cristina Cudrec	Project team member	Bistrita Municipality
Dana Zanca	Project team member	Bistrita Municipality
Maria Curtuius	Project team member	Bistrita Municipality
Elena Grecu	Project team member	Bistrita Municipality
Cristina Hangea	President	Tineri pentru comunitate - NGO involving youth in voluntary activities
Mircea Plaian	Inspector	Public Services Dept, in charge of local transport
Monica Luputi Anca Lazaric	Teachers	Scoala gimnaziala “Stefan cel Mare” primary school
Diana Dologa	Teacher	Colegiul National “Andrei Muresanu” primary school
Roxana Moldovan	Teacher	Scoala gimnaziala “Lucian Blaga” primary school
Stefan Lazaric	Teacher	Scoala gimnaziala “Avram Iancu” primary school
Sidor Costinasi	President	Cercetasii Romaniei – Scouts organisation



Vision/overarching objective

The overall vision is to have a greener and car-free city with easy access to and efficient public transport and soft mobility embraced and developed in co-creation with the Bistrița citizens. The means to have this implemented throughout citizens involvement is crucial within our COPE project. At this point the city is suffocated by the great number of cars, and especially during rush hours.

In the same time, the exchange of experience realized during the projects ‘lifetime with the international partners: Copenhagen (Denmark), Kavala (Greece), Pombal (Portugal), Saint-Quentin (France), A Coruna (Spain), Korydallos (Greece) and Vilnius (Lithuania) was very important. Once more we realized that no matter where in Europe, challenges are common, and we do not need to reinvent the wheel. Plus, we gave each other advice on how to solve each-others local challenge. And some of them were even fun, like the ones realized during the

Core meeting in Bistriţa, where the partners, after learning about the local challenges, were instructed to engage with the citizens, and create meaningful memes. Here are some examples:

Bikestrita

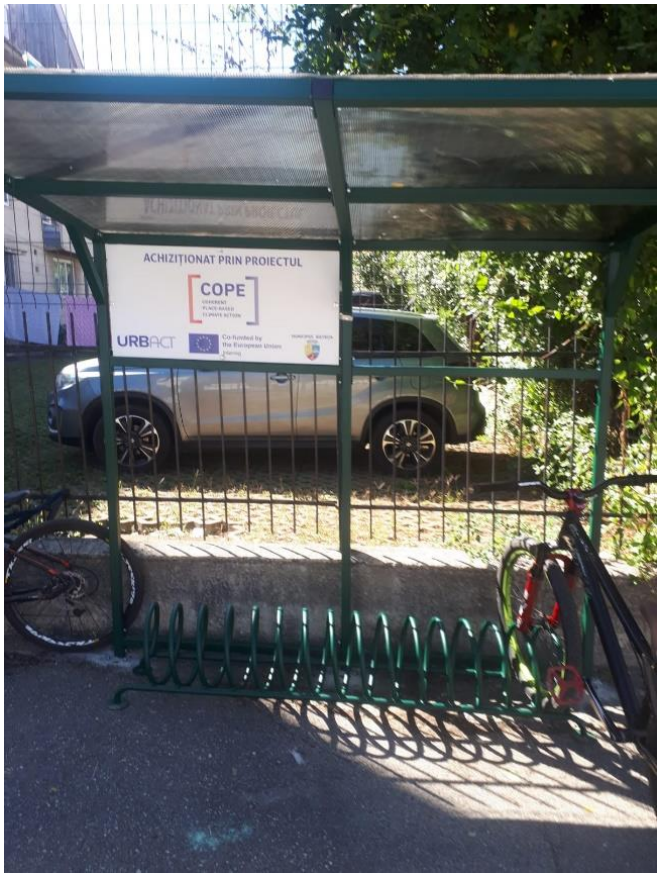
#bikestrita

Main integration challenges

The main identified challenges are: the resistance to behaviour change and limited infrastructure support; the psychological barrier from historical heritage (dictatorship); the car is associated with freedom; (energy) cooperative associated with communism etc, and last but not least the lack of political support/against it even.
To elaborate more on these, we would say that behavioural change, especially in relation to mobility, energy use, or civic participation, is not only a technical or policy issue — it's deeply psychological and cultural. Also, comfort vs change: people tend to stick with familiar habits (like driving cars) because they provide convenience, predictability, and a sense of control. Private car ownership is highly aspirational, a status symbol that reflects upward mobility, and the freedom to drive anywhere, anytime, is tied to personal liberation from state-imposed limitations of the past. Moreover, using public transport, bicycles, or carpooling can be perceived as less safe, less reliable, or more socially uncomfortable.
Mistrust in authorities as past experiences with government programs were negative or coercive, so citizens are less likely to trust new initiatives, no matter how beneficial they may seem. Giving up the car (or even reducing use) feels like a regression, especially if alternatives are seen as inadequate.
Voluntary action is for the naïve: scepticism persists that real change only happens from above, or that efforts are symbolic. In the local NGO field, the actors are the same all the time.
This makes mobility policies that promote modal shift (to public transport or bicycles) particularly sensitive.
Even when city administrations (like in Bistrița) commit to ambitious climate goals, real political support may be weak or even oppositional, due to several reasons: short-term political cycles and the politicians avoid risky or unpopular policies (e.g., reducing parking spaces, restricting car access); polarization: environmental policies may be framed as "elitist" or disconnected from everyday struggles (especially in poorer communities); lack of administrative capacity: even with good intentions, city hall may lack the human or technical resources to implement participatory or sustainable reforms effectively.

First ideas for testing actions at local level

The ULG meetings resulted in a set of ideas circled around build trust by demonstrating tangible benefits (comfort, savings), and co-creating small solutions with citizens in order to reduce the feelings of imposition and builds ownership. The idea is to frame sustainability in terms of comfort, cost-saving, and community well-being, not just environmental responsibility. People won't give up cars unless reliable alternatives are in place, this being the reason why the municipality started to operate the green line for dedicated electric bus when summer vacation began, so as to make the shift as smooth as possible, and people to be acquainted with it when the fall comes and the school begins again.
Within the meetings with the ULG we tried to identify as many solutions possible for the issues raised by the implementation of the mobility projects.
In the end, what we considered was that instead of having several little small-scale actions, it would be better to have a major impact one, that would definitely impact the way people relate to mobility. So, we purchased 14 bike racks and installed them in the secondary schools and high schools, to encourage the children to go to school by bike. Still, we wanted this to be also a local involvement of stakeholders: a teacher from the architecture school, an ULG member, to design the racks, and a local supplier to make it. As we learnt, making something out of the picture is not as cost effective as we envisaged it, so we decided to choose quantity over quality. For the sum that we could purchase 4 local designed and created racks, we bought 14 from a national urban furniture specialized producer. The schools and the children were very enthusiastic, and we firmly believe that encouraging the children to go by bike, we will make a significant change in their parents' mobility habits.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Section 2: Overall logic and integrated approach

Strategic objectives

Strategic Objective 1
Ensuring an inclusive transport system

Area of intervention 1: Accessibility

Specific objective 1: Adapting municipality to new trends in urban mobility for safe and secure streets

Area of intervention 2: Safe and secure streets – the pupils from local schools will create short videos to teach pedestrians, bikers and drivers to interact in the new created infrastructure

Specific objective 2: Changing people's perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours

Strategic Objective 2
Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
Area of intervention 1: Cleaner air
Specific objective 1: Reducing car dependence to promote the liveability and the quality of life

Specific objective 2: More attractive public spaces

Specific objective 3: Promoting a more peaceful quiet city centre

Present the logic from vision to action areas

Actions

NO	ACTION	TYPE	EXPECTED RESULTS	LEADER OF THE ACTION	PARTNER	FEASIBILITY/ASSETS/ BUDGET	TIMEF RAME	RELATION TO STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
1	Remove parking places	Long term	Less parking places needed More people using the green mobility	Municipality	Citizens NGO's Students	Close collaboration network between NGO, schools and Municipality; The power of example by students by using the electric buses Municipality resources	2030	Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
2	Excluding cars older than 15 yrs through bigger taxes and fees	Long term	Less parking places needed More people using the green mobility Less CO2 emissions	Municipality	Citizens NGO's	Close collaboration network between NGO, citizens and Municipality; Greater involvement of Local Police No budget needed	2030	Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
3	Promoting bike rental	Medium term	More bikers Less cars Less CO2 emissions	Municipality	Citizens NGO's ULG members	The existence of bike renting stations and bike lanes	2026	Strategic Objective 1 - Ensuring an inclusive transport system (available and accessible to all)

					Schools	Awards: prepaid vouchers for bike rent 2000-5000 euro Municipal budget sponsors		
4	Construction of a new parking lot in the city	Short term	Less cars Less CO2 emissions More people using public transport	Municipality	Citizens NGO's ULG members Schools	Close to the city center 600.000 euro Municipal budget	2026	Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
5	Contests and promotion of mobility actions in schools	Short-medium	Less cars Less CO2 emissions More people using public transport More bikers	Municipality	ULG members Schools	Children are the best example and the most willing to change 5000 euro	2025-2026	Strategic Objective 1 - Ensuring an inclusive transport system (available and accessible to all) Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
6	Biking rules: for the bikers,	Short-medium	Less CO2 emissions More bikers	Municipality	Citizens NGO's	Astringent need for education in this field	2025-2026	Strategic Objective 1 - Ensuring an inclusive transport system (available and accessible to all)

	drivers and pedestrians		Rehabilitate the streets		ULG members Schools	2000 euro		Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
7	Children police	Short-medium	Less CO2 emissions More bikers	Municipality	ULG members Schools	Astringent need for education in this field No budget needed	2025-2026	Strategic Objective 1 - Ensuring an inclusive transport system (available and accessible to all) Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption
8	Contest most km on the bike	Short-medium	Less CO2 emissions More bikers	Municipality	Citizens NGO's ULG members Schools	It is easier to involve people in embracing the change if there are prizes involved 5.000 euro	2025-2026	Strategic Objective 1 - Ensuring an inclusive transport system (available and accessible to all) Strategic Objective 2 - Reducing air and noise pollution, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and energy consumption

Section 3: Action planning details

Action 5+6+7+8	**Activity name** **Contests and promotion of mobility actions in schools**
Description of activities - Contest with bike related prizes - Promotional videos created by children to explain use of bike lanes	
Related area of intervention	Reducing car dependence to promote the liveability and the quality of life
Responsibilities: Lead: Municipality Partners: Local schools; Local police	
Implementation timeframe: **Yearly, for a circular period of 5 years** Q1: 1–2 months. Planning & Coordination. Define goals, design contest format, coordinate with schools and partners Q2: 1 month. Awareness & Promotion. Launch campaign, distribute materials, engage teachers and students Q3: 1–3 months. Contest/Activity Implementation. Run walking/biking/bus challenges, art or essay contests, safe routes audits Q4: Throughout. Monitoring & Data Collection. Record participation, feedback, mode of transport changes Q5: 1 month. Evaluation & Recognition. Analyze results, award prizes, share outcomes with school and community	
Costs Total costs: 10.000 euro Cost category: prizes in bikes or bike racks Resources needed: municipal funds, especially non-reimbursable financing from the local budget based on Law no. 350/2005 regarding the regime of non-reimbursable financing from public funds allocated for non-profit activities of general interest; - Participatory budgeting program.	
Monitoring of delivery Output indicator: Number of schools participating in the mobility contest or campaign. Number of students actively participating. Number of promotional materials distributed (e.g., flyers, posters, toolkits). Number of mobility-related events held (e.g., walk-to-school days, bike parades). Number of educational sessions/workshops conducted. Number of entries submitted to contests (e.g., art, writing, video). Mechanism of monitoring: Participation Logs & Attendance Sheets (Collected by teachers or school coordinators during events or challenges). Teacher or Coordinator Reports (Post-activity summaries describing what happened, who participated, and what was achieved). Photographic Evidence / Media Coverage (Images or videos of events, posters displayed, classroom activities, etc.). Entry Submissions Database (Track number and type of submissions (e.g., essays, artwork, digital entries). Surveys or Feedback Forms (Short forms completed by students or teachers about their involvement and impressions). Social Media or School Website Posts (Public documentation of event promotion or student recognition). Baseline date: beginning of school year (September).	

Target date: end of school year (June)

Result indicator: % increase in students using sustainable modes of transport (e.g., walking, biking, public transport). % decrease in private car drop-offs at school. % increase in awareness of sustainable mobility among students. % of students who report feeling safer walking or biking to school. % of parents supporting active travel for their children. Number of schools that adopted a mobility plan or permanent mobility action post-campaign.
Mechanism of monitoring: Pre - and Post-Campaign Surveys (Measure changes in travel mode, awareness, and attitudes (students, parents, teachers). Travel Mode Counts (Hands-Up Surveys) (Teachers ask students how they got to school; results are tracked over time). Traffic observations (Monitor drop-off traffic outside schools (manual counts or video)). Focus groups / interviews (With students or teachers to assess perceived changes in safety or engagement). School Reports or Mobility Logs (Tracking initiatives adopted after the contest (e.g., creation of a school travel plan)). Parental feedback forms (Assess changes in attitudes toward letting children walk or bike to school).

Result Indicator	Mechanism of Monitoring	Baseline	Target
+20% increase in students walking or cycling to school	Pre/post hands-up surveys	30% (Sept)	50% (June)
30% decrease in car drop-offs	Traffic count at school entrances	200 cars/day	140 cars/day
80% of students can name at least 2 benefits of walking	Student survey or quiz	40% (pre)	80% (post)
10 schools adopt mobility policies or travel plans	School follow-up reports	2 schools	10 schools

Baseline date: beginning of year
Target date: end of year

Challenges

Challenge	**Impact**	**Measures foreseen**
Limited time in school schedules	Low participation	Align with curriculum; keep activities short
Staff overload	Low engagement	Provide toolkits; assign dedicated coordinators
Parental resistance	Student participation blocked	Engage parents early; build trust and awareness
Unsafe infrastructure	Barriers to walking/cycling	Collaborate with local authorities on safety
Short-term impact	No long-term behavior change	Link to ongoing programs or school mobility plans
Lack of funding	Lower campaign quality	Use simple incentives; seek local sponsorship
Poor data collection	Hard to prove effectiveness	Offer standard surveys and reporting tools

Actions 3+6	**Activity name** Promoting bike rental

Description of activities

Activity	**Task Description**	**Additional input**
Market Research and Target Audience Identification	Conduct surveys to understand potential users' needs and barriers to bike rental (e.g., safety concerns, convenience, cost). Identify target audience (e.g., commuters, tourists, students, families)	Study other bike rental services or similar alternatives (e.g., car-sharing services) to understand what works and what doesn't
Partnerships with Local Businesses & Institutions	Collaborate with schools, universities, hotels, and businesses to offer exclusive deals or discounts for their staff, students, or guests. Partner with tourism boards or local events to integrate bike rental options into their offerings.	Create a corporate package for local businesses to provide bike rental access for employees
Design and Update Bike Rental Stations	Ensure convenience: Position rental stations in high-traffic areas (e.g., near public transport hubs, city centers, tourist attractions	Maintain the bikes: regularly check and repair bikes to ensure quality. Add features: Ensure that rental stations are accessible (e.g., app-based unlocking, helmets, bike accessories available).
Develop a User-Friendly Online Booking System	Build or update a mobile app and/or website for users to check bike availability, reserve bikes, and make payments. Offer real-time updates on bike availability, pricing, and promotions	Ensure secure payment options: accept digital payments like credit cards, mobile wallets, or membership subscriptions
Promotional Campaigns and Marketing	Run social media campaigns to reach a wide audience. Use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to showcase customer experiences, benefits, and promotions. Launch targeted ads based on demographics (e.g., "commute by bike" for office workers, "bike tours" for tourists). Use local influencers or bloggers to share their bike rental experiences and encourage others to try the service.	Offer promotions and discounts: limited-time offers, free first rides, or loyalty programs to attract new customers. Flyers and Posters: distribute printed materials in strategic locations, such as train stations, universities, and tourist info centers.
Host Events and Activities	Organize community bike rides or events like "Bike to Work Day" or "Family Bike Day" to encourage people to try out the service. Partner with local events, such as festivals or fairs, to offer free or discounted bike rentals for participants.	Launch a "test ride" program: allow potential customers to try out the service for a few minutes for free.

Description of activities

Activity	Task Description	Additional input
Collaborate with Local Authorities on Infrastructure Development	Advocate for bike-friendly infrastructure such as bike lanes, bike racks, and secure parking areas. Work with municipalities or local councils to integrate bike rental systems into public transport solutions.	Ensure safety standards: Ensure that bikes are equipped with necessary safety features, such as lights and bells, and promote the importance of using helmets.
Monitor Usage and Gather Customer Feedback	Track metrics such as bike usage rates, rental frequency, peak usage times, and areas with the most rentals. Survey customers for feedback on their experience with the bike rental service, including ease of use, pricing, bike quality, and customer service.	Adjust marketing strategies based on feedback to meet customer demands or improve user experience.
Sustainability and Environmental Campaigns	Highlight environmental benefits: promote the fact that using bikes reduces pollution and helps improve air quality, especially in urban areas. Partner with environmental organizations to promote cycling as part of a broader sustainability initiative.	Promote bike rental as a green alternative to car use, especially for short-distance travel.
Customer Support and Service	Establish 24/7 customer support through online chat, phone lines, or email to assist with booking issues, bike malfunctions, or payment queries. Implement a feedback system: Allow customers to rate their experience and report any issues they face with bikes or stations.	Description Ensure an easy return process: make the drop-off process quick and convenient for customers.

Related area of intervention	Reducing car dependence to promote the liveability and the quality of life

Responsibilities

Lead: Municipality

Partners: Schools, NGO's, citizens

Implementation timeframe: Yearly, for a period of 3 years

Phase	Duration	Key Activities
Planning & Strategy Design	1–2 months	Market research, audience analysis, stakeholder engagement, defining KPIs
Branding & Infrastructure Prep	1–2 months	Design branding, create communication materials, prepare stations
Digital Setup	1–2 months	Launch or update website/app, set up online booking and payment systems
Outreach & Partnership Building	1 month	Engage local businesses, schools, tourism boards, and city authorities
Launch Promotional Campaign	2–3 months	Advertising, social media campaigns, contests, influencer partnerships
Events & Community Engagement	1–3 months	Host bike rides, workshops, test ride days, participate in mobility weeks
Monitoring & Evaluation	Ongoing (from launch)	Collect usage data, survey users, track KPIs, adjust strategies accordingly

Costs

Total costs: 5000 euro

Cost category: Prepaid vouchers. Media coverage (announcements, social media paid ads, etc)

Resources needed: municipal funds like non-reimbursable financing from the local budget based on Law no. 350/2005 regarding the regime of non-reimbursable financing from public funds allocated for non-profit activities of general interest;
- Participatory budgeting program

- sponsorships

Monitoring of delivery

Baseline date: May

Target date: November

Result Indicator	Mechanism of Monitoring	Baseline	Target
+30% increase in bike rentals	Platform analytics	10,000/month	13,000/month
60% user awareness of rental service	Online user survey	30%	60%
75% of new users cite campaign as motivator	Post-registration survey	n/a	75%
85% user satisfaction rate	In-app rating or follow-up survey	70%	85%
15% decrease in car trips < 3 km (pilot zone)	Local travel diary survey or traffic counters	1000/day	850/day

Challenges		
Implementation challenges	**Impact**	**Measures foreseen**
Low Public Awareness or Interest. People may not know the bike rental system exists or understand its benefits.	Low adoption and return on investment in promotion	Run targeted, high-visibility campaigns; use testimonials, demos, and community engagement
User Onboarding Barriers. Complex registration processes, unclear pricing, or lack of digital access can discourage use	Potential users abandon sign-up or never try the service	Simplify sign-up process; offer first-time user tutorials or incentives; ensure multilingual interfaces
Inadequate Cycling Infrastructure. Lack of safe bike lanes, secure parking, or connected routes makes biking inconvenient or unsafe	Limits the appeal and safety of using rented bikes	Coordinate with city planning to improve infrastructure; highlight safe routes in the app
Limited Budget for *Promotion.* Promotion may be underfunded, especially compared to car-oriented transport	Low visibility of the service in key user segments	Focus on cost-effective digital campaigns, social media influencers, and local partnerships
Operational or Maintenance Issues. Bikes that are broken, unavailable, or poorly maintained can discourage use	Negative user experience and bad word-of-mouth	Ensure frequent maintenance checks and responsive customer support
Digital Divide and App Limitations. Some users may not have smartphones or struggle with app navigation	Excludes some demographics, especially older adults or low-income groups	Offer alternative access methods (e.g. SMS, kiosk-based rentals); design intuitive apps
Weather and Seasonal Variability. Usage drops in bad weather or colder months	Reduced return on promotional investment during certain times of the year	Run seasonal campaigns, offer weather-appropriate gear (e.g. ponchos), and plan promotions around peak seasons
Unequal Distribution of Bikes or Stations. Stations may be concentrated in certain areas, leaving gaps in others	Perceived or actual inaccessibility for some user groups	Use demand-based rebalancing; promote equity-focused expansion plans
Lack of Integration with Public Transport. If not aligned with transit hubs or other mobility services, bike rental loses value as a "last mile" solution	Lower ridership and limited use for commuting	Promote multimodal mobility; integrate with transport cards or journey-planning apps

Action 1+2	**Activity name** **Creation of new parking places**
Description of activities	
- Mandatory to remove the cars from the bike lanes and the bus'green line - Search for free lots close to the city - Build new car parkings	

Related area of intervention	A city with less cars
Responsibilities Lead: Municipality Partners: Citizens	

Implementation timeframe:

Q1: 2–4 months. Feasibility Study & Planning. Site selection, demand analysis, budgeting, stakeholder input
Q2: 3–6 months. Design & Approvals. Architectural design, permits, environmental assessments
Q3: 2–3 months. Procurement & Contracting. Tendering process, contractor selection
Q4: 6–12 months per parking lot. Construction. Earthworks, construction, lighting, signage, tech installation
Q5: 1–2 months. Inspection & Handover. Quality checks, testing smart systems, handover to operations
Q6: Immediate to 1 month post-handover. Operationalization. Parking system goes live; monitoring begins

Costs

Total costs: 600.000 euro
Cost category: land purchase, constructions
Resources needed: public procurement skilled staff, construction company

Monitoring of delivery

Output indicator: Number of new parking lots constructed
Mechanism of monitoring: Site inspection reports. Contractor progress reports. Construction permits and completion certificates. Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping and photos
Baseline date: 2025
Target date: 2026

Result indicator: % reduction in traffic congestion in surrounding areas
Mechanism of monitoring: Periodic traffic and parking surveys; Camera or drone traffic counts
Baseline date: 2025
Target date: 2026

Challenges

Implementation challenges	Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Measures foreseen
Legal & Regulatory Risks	Delays due to zoning restrictions, environmental regulations, or permit denials	Medium	High	Conduct early legal and zoning reviews. Engage with municipal authorities during planning. Ensure environmental impact assessments are completed on time
Land Acquisition & Ownership Risks	Issues acquiring land or disputes over ownership/title	Medium	High	Perform detailed due diligence before acquisition. Engage landowners early and transparently. Secure land through formal,

				documented processes
Construction Risks	Cost overruns, delays, contractor issues, or substandard work	Medium	High	Hire experienced contractors via competitive bidding. Include strict contractual terms for quality and timelines. Monitor construction closely through project management teams
Environmental & Weather Risks	Adverse weather delaying construction; flooding risks for parking areas	Low to Medium (location-dependent)	Medium	Schedule buffer time in construction timeline. Conduct environmental and drainage assessments. Use weather-resistant materials and smart drainage systems
Financial Risks	Budget shortfalls, unexpected costs, or funding delays	Medium	High	Maintain contingency funds (10–20% of budget). Confirm financing before starting. Regularly review budget forecasts vs actuals
Community & Stakeholder Resistance	Public opposition due to displacement, noise, or land use concerns	Medium	Medium	Hold public consultations. Communicate benefits clearly (reduced congestion, better access). Offer relocation or compensation where needed
Operational Risks (Post-construction)	Low usage, poor maintenance, or tech system failures (e.g., payment systems, sensors)	Medium	Medium	Conduct demand assessments before construction. Train staff in system operations.

				Schedule regular maintenance and updates

Action 7	**Activity name** **School police**

Description of activities

Activity	**Task**	**Additional input**
Preparation	Planning, approval, selection of students	Weeks 1–4
Implementation Readiness	Training, uniforms prepared, schedule finalized	Weeks 5–8
Development	Launch event, full deployment, feedback collection	Week 9 onward
Evaluation and Continuity	Monitoring, rotation, motivation, and improvement	Continuous

Related area of intervention	Improving safety and security in all modes of transport

Responsibilities

Lead: Schools
Partners: Municipality, Local Police, NGO's

Implementation timeframe

Yearly, for a period of 3 years

Phase	**Key Activities**	**Timeline**
Planning & Approval	Define program objectives, get school leadership and parent approval	Weeks 1–2
Student Selection	Develop criteria, announce program, recruit and screen students	Weeks 3–4
Training & Orientation	Deliver training sessions on safety, roles, behavior, and reporting	Weeks 5–6
Materials & Uniforms	Prepare vests, ID badges, duty rosters, and basic equipment	Weeks 5–6
Schedule & Duty Setup	Assign roles, create daily/weekly rotation, identify supervision needs	Week 7
Launch & Awareness	Hold an assembly or campaign to introduce the team to the school community	Week 8
Initial Deployment	Begin daily or weekly patrolling duties with supervision	Week 9 onward

Monitoring & Adjustment	Collect feedback, support students, revise logistics as needed	Weeks 10–12

Costs

Total costs: No budget needed
Cost category: Voluntary
Resources needed: Students

Monitoring of delivery

Output indicator: Number of student officers recruited and trained. Number of training sessions conducted. Number of duty shifts completed by student officers. Number of school zones or entry/exit points covered. Number of awareness activities conducted (assemblies, posters, newsletters, etc.)
Number of teachers or staff assigned to supervise the student patrol. Materials distributed (vests, ID badges, schedules, handbooks).
Mechanism of monitoring: Attendance and activity logs. Training attendance sheets. Weekly supervision reports. Photo documentation. Distribution checklists. Feedback forms (teachers, students). Community perception. Duty schedules and rotation rosters
Baseline date: beginning of school year (September)
Target date: end of school year (June)

Result indicator: Improvement in student safety awareness. Reduction in traffic violations in school zones (e.g., illegal parking, speeding). Increased number of students participating in pedestrian and road safety activities. Enhanced cooperation between students and staff regarding school safety. Increase in positive feedback from the school community (students, staff, parents). Number of safety incidents (e.g., accidents, near-misses) reported or reduced. Students demonstrate leadership and responsibility through patrol duties. Higher compliance with safety rules from students and parents.
Mechanism of monitoring: Surveys and questionnaires (Collect feedback from students, teachers, and parents on the perceived impact of the program).
Incident and accident reports (Track incidents before and after the program's launch to measure reduction in safety-related issues) .
Traffic violation monitoring (Work with local authorities or school security to track changes in traffic violations around the school).
Student patrol performance reviews (Regular assessments of student patrols by teachers or supervisors, based on feedback from staff and students).
Monthly feedback sessions (Hold sessions with students, staff, and parents to evaluate program effectiveness and identify areas of improvement).
Observational studies (Monitor student patrols during their duties to assess their engagement, effectiveness, and impact on traffic behaviour).
Comparative data analysis (Compare safety data (e.g., traffic accidents, incidents) before and after the program’s implementation).
t group discussions (Engage a small group of students, staff, and parents to discuss the program's influence on safety and behaviour)
Baseline date: beginning of school year (September)
Target date: end of school year (June)

Section 4: Implementation framework

Governance

To ensure the effective implementation and monitoring of the IAP (Implementation Action Plan), the responsible oversight body is in charge. This is related to the project team and the Local City Council. The project team takes responsibility in presenting it to the City Council, which takes responsibility in approving it with a formal decision. This process supports its accountability, enhances coordination between departments and stakeholders, and ensures transparency in decision-making. In presenting it to the city council it aligns the IAP's actions with the city's broader strategic goals and facilitates ongoing stakeholder engagement throughout the implementation process.

The commitment of local stakeholders is a critical factor in the successful implementation of the IAP. Active involvement from community groups, civil society organizations, local businesses, and residents ensures that the plan is grounded in local needs and realities. Their engagement not only fosters a sense of ownership but also contributes valuable insights and resources throughout the planning and execution phases. Building long-term partnerships and maintaining open, transparent communication channels with stakeholders will be key to sustaining momentum, addressing potential resistance, and ensuring the plan's actions are inclusive, equitable, and widely supported. As already proven in our vast experience in URBACT projects, the Urbact Local Group does not finish once the project finishes. They are already taking a continuation commitment when drafting this Plan and the actions that are foreseen to be implemented also in the following years.

Overall costings and funding strategy

A clear and realistic costing and funding strategy is essential to ensure the successful implementation of the IAP. This includes estimating the overall financial requirements for each action and phase of the plan, as already presented in the actions table. The funding strategy was developed, identifying potential sources such as municipal budgets, public-private partnerships (in kind), and grants from donors (parents of the children involved). It is also important to assess the actions after the first year, to see if the budget was well defined or if it needs fine tuning or adjustments. Transparent cost assessments and well-defined funding mechanisms will enhance credibility, facilitate stakeholder buy-in, and increase the likelihood of successful delivery.

The granting of non-reimbursable financing from the state budget for the activities carried out by non-governmental organizations is a practice whose beginning was marked in 1996, by the Ministry of Education, which financed for the first time projects proposed by the non-governmental sector in the field of scientific research. With the passage of time, at the national level, a multitude of mechanisms have been created for the granting of non-reimbursable financing from public funds for the activities of civil society organizations, the general legal framework in this matter being represented by Law no. 350/2005 on the regime of non-reimbursable financing from public funds allocated for activities of general interest. The passage of time, social and technological development are elements that have led to the increase in citizens' demands, which has demonstrated the need to improve the legal framework applicable to non-reimbursable financing in order to update, standardize and make transparent practices at the central and local public administration level.

The participatory budgeting program is a democratic process in which citizens directly decide how a portion of the public budget is spent. Through this mechanism, the community is involved in decision-making, and city halls can implement projects proposed and voted on by citizens.

Citizen involvement: Citizens propose projects to be implemented in the community.

Democratic process: Citizens vote on their preferred projects.

Allocation of funds: The city hall allocates funds from the public budget to the projects with the most votes.

Transparency: The process promotes transparency and accountability in the management of public funds.

Overall timeline

The overall timeline of our Integrated Action Plan (IAP) on the transition to a greener mobility is structured into clear phases, including short-term (1–2 years) and medium-term (3–5 years) actions. This phased approach allows for early wins, continuous evaluation, and the flexibility to adapt to changing circumstances. Each phase includes specific milestones, deadlines, and performance indicators to track progress and ensure accountability as seen in the actions table. This well-defined timeline also helps to coordinate efforts across departments and stakeholders, align with funding cycles, and communicate expectations clearly to the public. Integration with other urban planning timelines—such as climate, land use, and infrastructure strategies—is key to maximizing synergies and avoiding duplication of efforts.

Risk assessment

A comprehensive risk assessment is essential to anticipate and manage potential challenges that could hinder the successful implementation of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) on mobility. Risks may include political or institutional changes, funding uncertainties, stakeholder resistance, delays in project approvals, and unforeseen technical or environmental issues. Identifying these risks early on allows for the development of mitigation strategies—such as contingency planning, stakeholder engagement frameworks, and flexible implementation pathways. Regular monitoring and risk reviews should be integrated into the governance structure to ensure timely responses to emerging issues. A proactive risk management approach will enhance the plan's resilience and increase the likelihood of achieving its mobility and sustainability objectives.

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigation Strategy
Political or institutional changes	Medium	High	Secure cross-party support; embed IAP in official policy documents and long-term plans.
Funding uncertainties	High	High	Diversify funding sources; include contingency reserves; apply for external grants.
Stakeholder resistance (e.g. from residents or business)	Medium	Medium–High	Early and ongoing engagement; clear communication of benefits; participatory planning.
Project approval delays or administrative bottlenecks	Medium	Medium	Streamline internal processes; assign a dedicated coordination team.
Technical or infrastructure challenges	Low–Medium	High	Conduct feasibility studies in advance; build in time and budget buffers.
Lack of interdepartmental coordination	Medium	Medium	Set up a cross-departmental task force; regular coordination meetings.
Public perception or media backlash	Medium	Medium	Transparent communication; community outreach campaigns; respond to feedback proactively.

Changing mobility trends or technology shifts	Low–Medium	Medium	Design adaptable strategies; monitor trends and adjust plans as needed.

Monitoring and reporting

A robust monitoring and reporting framework is essential to track the implementation and effectiveness of the Integrated Action Plan (IAP) on green mobility. This framework outlines clear procedures for collecting, analyzing, and reporting data on progress toward strategic objectives. Key performance indicators (KPIs) and measurable targets are defined for each strategic objective, enabling both quantitative and qualitative assessment. Regular reporting intervals—such as quarterly or annual progress reports—will ensure transparency and allow for timely adjustments where needed. Involving stakeholders in the monitoring process enhances accountability and encourages continued engagement. If possible, digital dashboards or open data platforms will be used to share progress with the public and support evidence-based decision-making.

Strategic Objective	Indicator	Target	Data Source / Frequency
Promote sustainable transport modes	% of trips made by walking, cycling, or public transport	≥ 60% of total daily trips	Annual mobility survey
Improve public transport accessibility and coverage	% of population within 500m of a frequent public transport stop	50%	GIS data / Annual
Reduce private car use and congestion	Average daily traffic volume in city center	↓ 20% from 2025 baseline	Traffic counts / Biannual
Lower transport-related emissions	CO_2 emissions from urban transport (tons/year)	↓ 30% from 2025 baseline	Environmental agency reports / Annual
Raise public awareness of green mobility	% of residents aware of city's sustainable mobility plan	≥ 50%	Public survey / Every 2 years

Conclusion

This Integrated Action Plan on a greener mobility for Bistriţa provides a cohesive framework to create a more accessible, efficient, and sustainable transportation system. By combining policy measures, infrastructure development, technological innovation, and community engagement, the plan aims to improve connectivity, reduce environmental impacts, and enhance the quality of life for all users. Successful implementation will depend on strong coordination among stakeholders, continuous monitoring of outcomes, and a commitment to adapt strategies as mobility needs evolve. Through a shared vision and sustained effort, this plan lays the foundation for a modern, inclusive, and resilient mobility network that supports economic growth and environmental stewardship for the future.